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
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On the Cover

An operator from the Israeli National Police Border Guard undercover counter-terrorist unit prepares to storm a terrorist safehouse during a live-fire exercise to precede an actual assignment behind Hamas lines. See story, page 40.

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Frank W. James



Command Guidance

BY PETER CAROLINE

It's The People, Stupid

One of the most overused utterances coming from the liberal media today is the phrase "the Easy Accessibility Of Guns." According to these PC partisans of the First Amendment, the EAOG is directly responsible for the violence in our society.

It may be that most of today's journalists are too young to remember a time before the federal Gun Control Act of 1968. This was a time when anyone old enough to put cash in a stamped envelope could order a gun by mail. Any gun. Firms like Ye Olde Hunter in Alexandria, Virginia, and Klein's, in Chicago, were selling war surplus arms at prices that would make today's collectors salivate. There were no federal constraints on the purchase of handguns or long guns, and many states imposed no restrictions on the gun buyer or seller.

Even before I reached my teens, I owned a variety of guns, most of which worked. I even owned a Japanese "knee mortar," an ingenious device that fired, as I recall, an approximately 2-inch diameter explosive projectile. It was a Pacific war souvenir that was, at that time, quite legal for anyone to own. Even if the local hardware or gun stores had ammo for this beastie, I doubt very much that I would have gone berserk with it in school. In a similar vein, like many other kids my age, I had something called a Gilbert Chemistry Set. And, yes, it did include such staples of the bomb-maker's pantry cupboard as potassium nitrate, sulphur and powdered charcoal, plus instructions on how to make black powder and a variety of pyrotechnic compounds. I also had a 1919-vintage volume entitled *The Boys' Book of Chemistry*, by Charles Ramsay Clarke. My favorite section was Chapter XIV, "The Chemistry of Warfare." In it were detailed the formulae for nitroglycerine, nitrocellulose, TNT, cordite and picric acid. Amazing to relate, this infor-

mation was readily available to children — at least, to literate children — long before there was an Internet. Did I, or anyone else in my recollection, try to blow up a school or use poison gas in a subway? Absolutely not; we knew implicitly that this was unacceptable behavior. And maybe that's part of the answer — it was, after all, a time in which there were standards of behavior.

I do not recall my childhood as being a time of great violence. Granted, there were wars such as WWII and Korea, in which a large amount of government-sanctioned mayhem was going on. But on the home front, we were not assaulted by weekly accounts of school massacres. Were there guns in the schools? Yes, indeed. I can recall several instances of interesting antique or war souvenir guns being brought into grade school class for show-and-tell.

Call me dense, but I cannot understand how "the Easy Accessibility Of Guns" in itself creates a climate of violence, any more than the easy accessibility of food automatically creates gross obesity. To my way of thinking, what does create a climate of violence is a society in which everyone is entitled to do his or her own thing with no expectation of adverse consequences. Nothing is anyone's fault. Nobody is a criminal or monster; they are victims of society. Where does it all end? If it's up to our government, the left-wing media hacks and the liability sharks, it will not end with the banning of all private ownership of guns. That's been tried in other countries and the violence still continues. There are still more essential freedoms — all protected by the Bill of Rights — which are offensive to the communitarian mindset. The blame game will continue until we as a society come to the realization that it's not the guns, it's not the drugs or booze or junk foods or TV — it's the people, stupid. ✘

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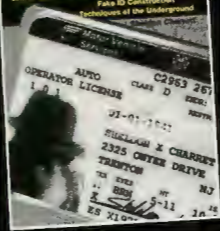


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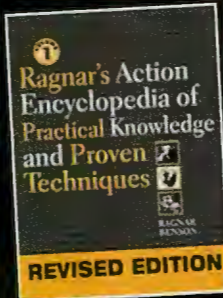
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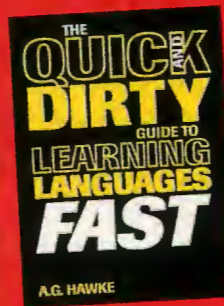


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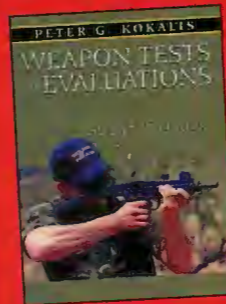
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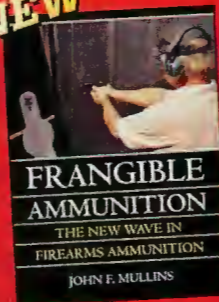


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Bulletin Board

U.S.N.S. Benavidez

A Navy strategic sealift ship has been christened the U.S.N.S. Benavidez in honor of Sgt. Roy Benavidez (MOH), friend of SOF who passed away in San Antonio in 1998. Roy Benavidez was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1981 by President Reagan for his valor in a 1968 battle near Loc Ninh, Vietnam, where he saved eight fellow SF troopers in a savage fight that erupted when a North Vietnamese regiment surrounded a dozen men from his unit on a behind-the-lines mission. Benavidez was shot, clubbed and stabbed during the fierce firefight, but despite his wounds he managed to carry his fellow wounded to the rescue chopper, call in airstrikes, and even retrieve classified documents from the dead.

SOF Now Shipped in Armor Plate!

Starting with the November 2001 edition, *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine will be mailed to subscribers in a tough, waterproof, opaque, silver poly bag to survive the rigors of mail handling and prevent pilferage. We hope our loyal subscribers like this upgrade in service!

NRA-ILA Launches Improved Website

One of the seminal sources for hard facts to use in shoveling away the avalanche of disinformation put out by the anti-gun fanatics has always been the ILA website: www.NRAILA.org. Although always useful, we are happy to note that the site has undergone a complete redesign aimed at

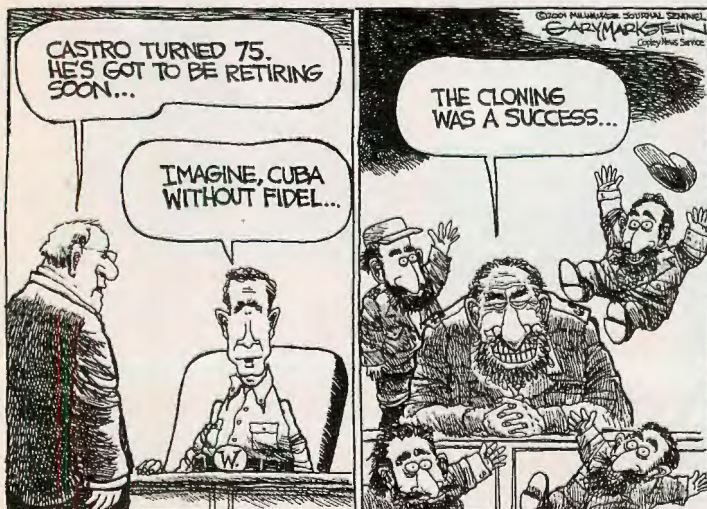
making it *more* useful, and easier to navigate. Check out that site for the latest developments, or for links to contact your various elected reps. New features include a searchable archive of articles and the "Armed Citizen" columns since 1958. New information and items requiring action are posted on a regular basis, so check them out early and often.

FoundDogTags.com

Rob Stiff and George Gain went to Vietnam last January on a business trip, and in a backstreet flea market they spotted a set of G.I. dog tags. They returned last May and scoured the back streets of Ho Chi Minh City and turned up some 640 tags, which they purchased for a total of \$180. Many were the worse for wear, but Stiff and Gain transcribed the tags onto a database (www.founddogtags.com) and as they locate the previous owners or their families, have been returning the tags to them. Many matches were found on the wall, and many other previous owners have thankfully turned up among the living and have had their lost dog tags returned to them. If you lost your tags, or if you have family on the wall who did not return with their tags, check out this site.

S.E. Asian Resistance

SOF readers will want to check out a *Washington Post* story by Jim Coyne about the growing number and scope of Lao, Cambodian, Montagnard and Vietnamese resistance organizations operating in S.E. Asia today. The story can be viewed on <http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A4058-2001jul29.html>.



Castro Cracking Up?

Recent TV speeches by Fidel Castro have given rise to rumors, or at least hope, that the aging maximum leader is starting to slip away. In one speech he began talking to himself and mentioned the five, then six provinces of Cuba (under Batista, Cuba had six provinces, but under Castro there are 14). At one point he became very frustrated at "all these papers" (his prepared speech), exhibited facial tics and began drooling. In another recent speech he appeared to be overcome with the heat and slumped over the microphones, then was led away by his aides.

Crime Skyrockets In Prince George's

Further to the recent article by Fred Reed, is a story in the

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Washington Post citing Prince George's PD internal memos that state crime has skyrocketed during the first six months of 2001. Homicide is up 38.6%, robbery is up 37%, and carjacking is up a whopping 98% over last year at this time. Even non-violent crimes are up: burglary 30.1%, larceny 7.1% and grand theft auto up 30.4%.

Former Aussie Cop To Pay For Assault

Former New South Wales policeman P.E. Connett has been ordered to pay the NSW government some \$180,000 in damages awarded to an aboriginal man he "bashed" while on duty. The abuse of Vernon Moran was recorded on closed-circuit TV, and shows him being dragged from a room by his hair. The government awarded Moran the damages, and then in turn filed suit against Connett to recover the damages.

New BDUs For Leathernecks

For the first time in 20 years, the Marines are to get a new camouflage pattern battle-dress uniform. The new pattern has stronger brown tones, and the desert pattern has lighter brown tones with sand-colored areas. The new pattern is a series of computer-generated pixels as opposed to the well-defined Woodland Camouflage patterns, and the new uniforms feature such changes as hook and loop fasteners for breast pockets, reinforced knees and will be made from permanent press fabric. The new uniform will also feature boots of rough-out suede. Field trials of the new uniforms have been underway at marine bases at

Twenty-Nine Palms, Camp Pendleton and Okinawa.

Enfield Collector's Digest

One of the finest battle rifles the world has even known was the Lee Enfield, but it has gone largely unappreciated in the U.S. for no other reason than that hundreds of thousands were sold at retail in the \$15 price range after Great Britain sold them to Interarmco back in the late '50s, when Tommy Atkins adopted the FN/FAL rifle. Since that time, however, the Enfield has grown to be more appreciated as the capable and reliable arm it is, and the collecting of Enfields has blossomed in the U.S. as it had earlier in Commonwealth countries. Few artifacts can trace the history of the British Empire as well as the evolution of the Enfield rifle in all its various marks and modifications.

Thus we were pleased to receive a copy of *The Enfield Collector's Digest*, an interesting newsletter by, for and about collectors of Lee-Enfield rifles, accessories, and British and Commonwealth militaria. Although dedicated to Enfields, the *Digest* is an eclectic publication filled with fascinating historical minutia. Did you know, for instance, that some of the first troops to be issued the No. 5 "Jungle Carbine" were Poles in Norway? You can order a sample copy for \$5 from the *Enfield Collector's Digest* at Box 898, Brighton, CO 80601; or contact them by phone: 303-637-0319; or by e-mail at asmle@frii.com.

California Strikes Brady Bunch's Reckless Suit

The California Supreme Court has handed down an over-

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whelming 5-1 rejection of the premise that gun makers can be held responsible when their lawful products are used in the commission of a crime. The suit, originally filed in 1994 by the HCI "Legal Action Project" was an attempt to hold Navegar, a Florida gun maker, responsible for the 1993 rampage of Gian Luigi Ferri, of San Francisco.

The American Bar Association responded quickly with a resolution to establish their official position against laws that prohibit the type of [lucrative] lawsuit the California Supreme Court had just so strongly rejected.

SOF's Geer Part of Action/Adventure Novel Team

SOF's Outdoor Affairs Editor Galen L. Geer is one of the writers working with the New American Library division of Penguin Putnam to produce the TALON adventure series.

This line of books is designed as men's action/adventure military novels and is developed as "quick reads." Plots in the series always pit seven "super-soldiers" — the elite of TALON Force — against bad guys, out to change the balance of power in the world — or at least kill a bunch of Americans as revenge for some perceived wrong.

Geer was first approached about working on the TALON adventure novels nearly two years ago when the publisher first began planning the series. "At first," Geer said, "they wanted some ideas on what the team should consist of and I tried to steer them into some reality."

A few of Geer's suggestions were incorporated into the

TALON Bible for writers, which outlines how the TALON Force functions, its command and control, even the equipment the team uses. Some combat veterans might be put off by the TALON concept of using super high-tech equipment which sometimes makes the characters seem larger than any combat trooper they served with, but readers should keep in mind that a lot of the equipment in the TALON series is either in testing or has already been issued to special units of the U.S. Armed Forces. Some of the equipment used in the novels seems to have been yanked right off the set of Star Wars or some other science fiction movie!

The acronym TALON is for Technologically Augmented Low Observable Networked Force. There are seven members of each TALON team and the Eagle team, which is the team used in the novels, consists of five men and two women.

From the standpoint of credibility the TALON series sometimes pushes the limit, but the novels are not intended to be anything more than entertainment for readers who like some quick escapism adventure over the weekend.

"These books are fun to write," Geer said, "you can let your imagination run wild, cooking up all sorts of schemes to threaten America's national security, then these super soldiers are rushed in to save America and the world."

Geer pointed out that in fiction a writer can often play "What if?" questions against a background of characters that have already been established and look at some interesting issues. In Geer's TALON novel, *Slaughterhouse* (scheduled to be released on November 7) he asked him-

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Moustafa Ismail
 "Washington has deported children from southern Sudan and recruited them in the Marines".
Moustafa Ismail, the Sudanese foreign minister.

Looking for a few good children? Courtesy of Rich Sheridan is this clipping from the Egyptian Gazette, a Cairo English-language newspaper.

self (as a writer) the question about what would happen if some segments of southern Africa's white minority turned to international terrorism on a grand scale in an effort to return present day Zimbabwe to minority rule. "The idea came from two sources," Geer said, "first Michelle asked me what would happen to the world's economics if, suddenly, cattle started dying, and second by the Zimbabwe government's decision to once again illegally seize white-owned farms."

Geer's novel takes a different look at both contemporary southern African politics and the region's history in setting the stage for the novel. What disturbed Geer, however, was learning that what he'd thought had been an out-of-left-field idea for a novel is considered a very possible terrorist threat against the western world.

"Slaughterhouse is a fun read," Geer said. "No one should it take as anything more than a piece of fiction. I will admit that in the plot, I did try to bring in some real issues about political racism by past and present governments and how it clouds attempts at today's peace."

TALON books are available in most book stores, if not they can be special ordered by that store.

All the TALON novels are written under the pseudonym of Cliff Garnett, but SOF readers who'd like to order an autographed copy of *Slaughterhouse* can contact Geer via email at: glgwriter@compuserve.com. For more information on the series write: TALON Force Books, Dept. SOF, Penguin/Putnam Inc., 375 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014.

— Galen L. Geer ✕

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		GRAINS	JACKET	TYPE		
CENTERFIRE PISTOL						
	9MM LUGER (9X19)	115	COPPER	FMJ	BERDAN	1150
	9X18 MAKAROV	109	COPPER	FMJ	BERDAN	1033
	.380 AUTO (9X17)	91	COPPER	FMJ	BERDAN	1010
	40 S&W	180	COPPER	FMJ	BOXER	990
	.45 AUTO	230	COPPER	FMJ	BOXER	850
CENTERFIRE RIFLE						
	7.62X39	122	BIMETAL OR COPPER	HP, FMJ, SP	BERDAN	2396
	.223 REM	55	COPPER	HP, FMJ	BOXER	3241
	.223 REM	62	COPPER	FMJ	BOXER	3025
	5.45X39	60	BIMETAL OR COPPER	HP, FMJ	BERDAN	2886
	7.62X54R	200	COPPER	FMJ, 5P	BERDAN	2380
RIMFIRE RIFLE						
	.22 LONG RIFLE MATCH TARGET	40	SOLID	ROUND NOSE	RIMFIRE	1050
	.22 LONG RIFLE MATCH GOLD	40	SOLID	ROUND NOSE	RIMFIRE	1033

Rimfire ammunition is brass case and manufactured by SK Jagd-und, Germany
 All other ammunition is steel case. Specifications subject to change without prior notice.

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Keep 'Em Shooting

TEXT & PHOTOS BY STEVE COMUS

Loading For The 7x57mm Cartridge



Of all the pre-1898 Mauser military rifles, probably more were chambered for this cartridge than all others combined, and it would probably rate a close second for all-times and models. This is because so many countries adopted it — nearly all of the Spanish-speaking world.

It was the Model 1893 and 1895 Spanish Mausers that really made the cartridge famous. However, both Model 1895 and 1898 action variations were common among Latin-American countries. Mexico even purchased a number of Remington rolling block, single-shot rifles chambered for this cartridge, as well as type 38 Japanese Arisakas.

For this writing, we'll cover both the pre-98 and 98 rifles and loads for them.

When it comes to the action design, the Spanish 93 and 95 are quite similar, as are the various 95s used by numerous Latin American countries. However, when loading for a specific rifle, it is generally a good idea to identify the military loading that country used, and attempt to duplicate it. This way, the rifle will tend to shoot to the military sights.

Barrel lengths varied over time and among the various countries. However, the most common lengths encountered are 19, 21-1/2 and 29 inches. Nominal bore diameter for the 7x57mm is .276-inch, with nominal groove diameter at .287-inch. Rifling for this cartridge in military rifles is four-groove, with a right-hand twist. However, the rate of twist varied, depending upon the country.

For example, Spanish Mausers have one turn in 8.7 inches, while Brazilian and Chilean Mausers have one turn in 8.65 inches. Not much difference, but a difference nonetheless.

The original Spanish loading sent a 173-grain bullet out at 2,296 feet per second. This loading also was used at times by other countries. Both Brazil

and Colombia used a 139-grain bullet loading at 2,950 fps, Uruguay used a 142-grain bullet at 2,740 fps, and Mexico used both 155- and 162-grain bullets at 2,300 fps.

Although the Spanish Mausers were made in Spain, most of the 7x57mm Mauser rifles used by other countries were made in Germany on contract. For example, Lowe in Berlin made the Chilean Model 1895 rifle, and Deutsche Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken (DWM), in Berlin, made the Model 1898/08 Brazilian rifle.

Sights on the various 7mm Mauser military rifles are of the tangent and/or ladder varieties. Basic battle settings start at 200 meters for some, 300 meters for others. Generally, the rear sight adjusts to an optimistic 2,000 meters. Front sights are of the classic Mauser inverted "V" front post that is drift adjustable for windage.

Trigger systems for the 7x57mm Mauser military rifles are the two-stage design, and pull weights encountered are all over the place. Expect the pull to be at least six pounds, and don't be surprised if it is over seven. Letoff also varies tremendously. Most letoffs are okay, some are spongy and a few are extremely crisp. Among all of the 7x57mm military rifles, the author has found that the best trigger pulls are on the Model 1895 Chilean rifles. In fact, it might be suggested that the Chilean rifles are the best of the 95s in all respects.

Mexican Mausers, however, represent an entire arena of interest in their own right. Most famous of them are the small ring 98s made in Mexico. These are great rifles, and their actions have been used in many superb custom rifles.

On the civilian front, the 7x57mm cartridge is legendary in hunting circles. For example, the cartridge also is known as the .275 Rigby rimless, and it was one of the cartridges used extensively by W.D.M. Bell to



The Model 1895 action is Mauser all the way. Note the length the striker extends from the rear of the striker shroud. This long striker travel is typical for pre-1898 Mauser actions.

take elephant in Africa early in the 20th Century.

Generally speaking, however, the 7x57mm is considered to be a credible hunting cartridge for medium-size game like deer. Because it offers mild recoil and rifles in good condition tend to shoot well, this cartridge can be quite effective in the hunting mode.

Whether the rifles are 95s or 98s, they all share similar five-round stagger-box magazines and non-rotating claw extractors. Bolt removal for cleaning also is the same: pull out the lever on the left rear of the action and the bolt comes out.

The various models also all feature the three-position Mauser safety system in the striker shroud on the rear of the bolt. When the safety wing is to the left, it is in the "fire" mode, and when it is to the right, it is in the "safe" mode and the bolt is locked shut. When the wing is in the middle, the striker assembly can be removed when the bolt is out of the receiver.

And, all of the models feature the typical two front locking lugs of Mauser fame. The pre-98s lack the third "safety" lug of the 98s. Also, the pre-98s cock on closing, while the 98s cock on opening. The final most noticeable difference in the actions is that the anti-bind system in the pre-98s is manifest via mill cuts in the left side of the receiver, while the anti-bind device on the 98s is a raised rail on the bolt itself that travels into a mill cut inside the rear receiver bridge.

All of the pre-98 rifles have actions of the "small ring" pat-



The 7x57mm cartridge was also chambered in the Model 1898 Mauser. Here is a Model 1898-08 Brazilian Mauser, made by DWM.

tern. This means the front receiver ring has a diameter of 1 1/4 inches. Most of the 98s have what is known as "large ring" receivers — the front receiver ring is 1 3/8 inches in diameter. However, the Mexican 98s have the small ring dimension.

Loading for the 7x57mm cartridge is both simple and straightforward. Most major commercial ammunition makers offer factory loads for this cartridge, which means there is a good supply of reloadable Boxer-primed cases

available with the proper headstamp. However, like the other 57mm Mauser-designated cartridges, it is also easy to make cases from any of the full-length 06 cases — .25-06 Remington, .270 Winchester, .280 Remington or .30-06 Springfield.

All it takes to convert the full-length 06 brass to 7x57mm is to use a form/trim die. Lube the case, run it all the way into the die and then use a hacksaw to whack off the neck that sticks out of the top of the die. Then use a flat file to square off the cut while the case is still in the die. Next, chamfer the mouth inside and out. Then reload as usual.

A standard two-die set is used to reload this cartridge. First, use sizing lube on the outside of the case and a little on the inside of the neck (cotton swab works well). The sizing die re-sizes and de-primers the case. Remove the lube and re-prime the case before inserting the powder charge. Then the seating die is used to seat the bullet. Most die sets have a mouth-crimping feature that can be used, if desired. Usually

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it is not necessary to crimp the mouth of the case when the bullet is seated, however.

For most purposes, there are two bullet weights that take care of needs: 139/140-grain and 175-grain.

For many reasons, there is a degree of caution necessary when loading ammunition for surplus rifles of any kind, and some of those chambered for the 7x57mm cartridge in particular. For example, some were made better than others, and some have suffered damage over time. Consider that many of these rifles are over 100 years old now. It should be noted

that maximum loads for rifles with pre-'98 actions (Models 1892, 1893 and 1895) should be limited to the following "starting loads," and only then in rifles that have been determined to be in good shooting condition by a qualified gunsmith. Loads listed here as "maximum loads" should be used only in rifles in good condition with 1898 actions.

Maximum case length for the 7x57mm is 2.235 inches. A standard large rifle primer is used, and component bullet diameter is .284-inch. Maximum overall cartridge length for most magazines is 3.065 inches. ❧

140-GRAIN BULLETS

STARTING LOADS

46.0 grains Of AA4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,500 fps.
49.0 grains of H4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,600 fps.
46.0 grains of H414.	Muzzle velocity 2,700 fps.
50.0 grains of H4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,600 fps.
51.0 grains of H450.	Muzzle velocity 2,600 fps.
49.0 grains of IMR 4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,500 fps.
48.0 grains of IMR 4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,600 fps.
46.0 grains of Win. 760.	Muzzle velocity 2,700 fps.
49.0 grains of Reloder 19.	Muzzle velocity 2,600 fps.

MAXIMUM LOADS

51.0 grains of AA4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
52.0 grains of H4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
48.0 grains of H414.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
53.0 grains of H4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,750 fps.
54.0 grains of H540.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
51.0 grains of IMR 4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
50.0 grains of IMR 4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
48.0 grains of Win. 760.	Muzzle velocity 2,800 fps.
52.0 grains of Reloder 19.	Muzzle velocity 2,775 fps.

175-GRAIN BULLETS

STARTING LOADS

42.0 grains of AA4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,200 fps.
46.0 grains of H450.	Muzzle velocity 2,250 fps.
47.0 grains of H4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,300 fps.
45.0 grains of H4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,250 fps.
47.0 grains of IMR 4878.	Muzzle velocity 2,350 fps.
43.0 grains of IMR 4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,250 fps.
41.0 grains of Win. 760.	Muzzle velocity 2,250 fps.
46.0 grains of Reloder 22.	Muzzle velocity 2,350 fps.
44.0 grains of Reloder 19.	Muzzle velocity 2,300 fps.

MAXIMUM LOADS

47.0 grains of AA4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,500 fps.
49.0 grains of H450.	Muzzle velocity 2,450 fps.
49.0 grains of H4350.	Muzzle velocity 2,450 fps.
48.0 grains of H4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,450 fps.
50.0 grains of IMR 7828.	Muzzle velocity 2,500 fps.
46.0 grains of IMR 4831.	Muzzle velocity 2,450 fps.
43.0 grains of Win. 760.	Muzzle velocity 2,375 fps.
48.0 grains of Reloder 22.	Muzzle velocity 2,500 fps.
47.0 grains of Reloder 19.	Muzzle velocity 2,450 fps.

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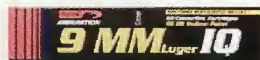
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Get Your Gear

BY TOM CHAMBERS

Wiggy's



AS I mentioned in my previous columns, I learned a lot of lessons in the Army the hard way because I either didn't know how to use my equipment properly, didn't maintain it, or didn't have the proper equipment with me when I needed it the most. That's basically what this column is about. I'm going to present some basics about how to select the gear you might need and how to properly maintain and use it, and might even give a specific recommendation on a product that I've successfully used in the past.

Like most people in the military I would give you a million dollars for the experience and what I learned about people and places in the service, but to go through it all again, well, there's no amount of money in the world. Some of the best things of my life were experienced in the U.S. Army (like I could legally drink beer at age 18). Unfortunately, some of the worst things in my life also occurred during that time period.

Two experiences in the Army taught me a valuable lesson about choosing the right gear for cold weather use. The coldest I have ever been in the life, and I know you are going to laugh, was at Fort Ord, California. I was in advanced light weapons infantry training. During the day they ran our butts off. We stopped to eat about dusk, then humped for a night-training class attacking an enemy dug-in on a hill. By the time we got back we were tired, sweaty and pretty dirty. Then the weather changed. It got very damp and cold with about a 30 mph wind coming off the Pacific Ocean. I froze, and so did 100 other guys in the 35-degree weather. Know what? We didn't have the right gear for the weather conditions. Fatigues and a fatigue jacket, that was it. We didn't even have proper sleeping bags. We had been issued what was called a mummy bag; wool liner, one each. We went to bed wet and stayed that way all night as the sleeping bag didn't keep our body heat in.

Skip ahead about two years. Germany, trying to qualify on the KD range with our new M-14s. Weather, about 10 below, a few inches of snow on the ground. Hell, I might as well have been in Miami Beach in July soaking up the sun. Thermal boots, cold-weather pants with liner, parka with liner and hood, OD shirt, trigger finger gloves, and thermal long johns, and arctic-quality sleeping bag. Here it was 45 degrees colder than Fort Ord and I'm as snug as a bug in a rug. Don't ever tell me the proper gear can't make the difference.

Another thing you might have noticed about me and the gear I write about is that a lot of the companies I mention are also suppliers to the U.S., and other, armed forces. That's because their stuff has to be up to very high standards to qualify for purchase. One of those companies is Wiggy's who makes the very best sleeping bags ever used by several members of the *Soldier Of Fortune* staff.

Owner Jerry Wigutow (Wiggy) tells us why his bags are so superior to others. Lamilite insulation is presently the most efficient form of sleeping bag or outerwear garment insulation in existence.

It wasn't until 1986 that Wiggy developed the necessary technology that allowed him to use this remarkable fiber for sleeping bags and outerwear. This was accomplished by means of a proprietary laminating process. This process negates the need to quilt the materials together as most manufacturers do.

Lamilite is also lightweight and very soft. Put on a Lamilite parka and you will automatically think it is down. The same holds true for Wiggy's sleeping bags. They surround the body much the way a down bag does; filling in or draping close around the body. This eliminates heat loss

from convection. Conductive heat loss is reduced significantly. The fiber used for Lamilite is densely packed into Wiggy's bags. Therefore, the loss of heat via conduction is minimized. Lamilite is more than the fill put in the bag; it is a combination of nylon fabric and fiberfill, two components that aid each other. The first part is visible. It is the 70-denier nylon commonly known as single-ply taffeta. The 70-denier refers to the thickness of the yarn. The actual weave is 86 yarns in one direction and 104 yarns in the other — per square inch. The thickness of the yarn is the optimum thickness to absorb body heat and quickly warm to your body temperature. The faster this warming occurs, the slower the rate of conductive heat loss from you body. The spaces between yarns in this construction allow the moisture your body produces to easily escape. It doesn't matter how dry a climate may be, your body gives off moisture. Therefore, it is important to allow this moisture easy exit. Water is extremely efficient at absorbing heat, so you always want to stay as dry as possible.

What you can't see inside the bag is unbounded silicone-coated continuous filament fiber. The silicone coating gives the fiber two very desirable properties. The first is "anti-static" which allows the fibers to perpetually repel each other, regardless of how tightly the fibers are packed against each other — as in a "stuff sack." In fact, a Wiggy's bag was compacted under 20 tons of pressure in two poly bags. After four days it was opened and in one hour, without assistance, 90% of its loft had returned.

When shopping for a sleeping bag (hopefully at Wiggy's) there are a few things to keep in mind. First, know what temperature you will be sleeping in and get a bag rated for it. If you're in between zones, go for the colder-rated bag. Know your height and make sure the bag is long enough to fit you. If you are a big person you might have to order a larger bag than what's in stock. And, in closing, Wiggy says to never jump in your bag with wet clothes on. Change your clothes and you'll have a better night's sleep. However, if you have no choice your body heat will dry the clothes out by morning.

For more information on Wiggy's products, write to Wiggy's Inc., PO Box 2124, Grand Junction, CO 81502; or phone them at 800-748-1827; and visit their web site at www.wiggys.com. ☒

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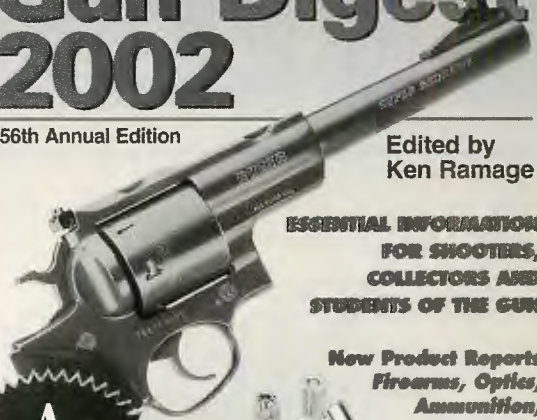
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Battle Blades

BY BILL BAGWELL

Spyderco Chinook

Today's cutlery marketplace is chock-full of knives aimed at the tactically minded consumer. The most hotly contested segment of this venue is to be found in the arena of tactical folders, and nearly all of the major manufacturers offer knives that fall into this category. Most offer not one, but several, each targeting a specific segment of the market.

To say that Spyderco is a major player in the tactical folding knife market is an understatement. The case could be made that this company actually caused the market to develop when Spyderco boss Sal Glesser patented the now famous round-hole opening feature that enables the user to instantly and effortlessly open his Spyderco folder with either hand. A constantly innovative company, Spyderco lists 62 patents that cover the various aspects of their knives, and was one of the first companies to enter into design collaboration with a wide range of custom knifemakers and combatives specialists. This has allowed Spyderco to develop a line of products that includes more than 35 folding knives, as well as trainers and a fairly extensive lot of professional grade chefs knives and sharpening equipment.

One of the most eagerly anticipated knives in a long time is the newly released Spyderco Chinook. The Chinook has an impressive pedigree. It is designed by none other than James A. Keating, the driving force behind Comtech. Keating and Comtech are pragmatic and to the point, and the Comtech blade training program developed by Keating is as good as it gets. Spyderco President Sal Glesser is well aware of this as he is a past participant in Comtech's highly regarded Riddle Of Steel, in Hell's Canyon. It is a natural progression that Spyderco should seek Keating's input on a street savvy folder.

The Chinook is, as you would expect, very well made and exhibits a high level of workmanship. The 3.75-inch blade is a substantial 5/32 inch thick and made of CPM 440V, a steel that has gained wide acceptance in the industry for use in high end folding knives. It is tempered to RC 57, a level of hardness that allows good edge holding and reasonable ease of sharpening. The blade has a slightly upswept point in a modified Bowie style that gives a lot of belly on the cutting edge. That cutting edge, incidentally, is available both plain and 50/50 plain and serrated. We opted for the plain-edged version for our test. Expertly hollow ground, our test sample

arrived sharp out of the box. The Chinook does not enjoy the sharpened clip on the back of the blade that is a design feature of the true fighting Bowie, however. While the sharpened clip is a desirable, even mandatory, feature on a true fighting knife, it is a genuine safety liability on a pocket folder and is therefore absent on the Chinook.

The Chinook is resented by Spyderco as being designed for both Martial Blade craft and tactical applications while at the same time having the capability of being used as a field knife and meeting hunting/camp knife requirements. The fact that the Chinook is being called upon to touch so many bases has, as is always the case, shaped the final product.



One of the most eagerly anticipated knives in a long time is the newly released Spyderco Chinook. It has an impressive pedigree — designed by none other than James A. Keating.

The first thing that strikes you when you see the Chinook is its size. It is a larger than average folder, measuring 4 7/8 inches in length closed, and boasts an open overall length of 8 9/16 inches. The Chinook is slightly over a half-inch thick across the handle scales, not counting the pocket clip. Weight is close to half a pound at 7.25 oz. There is size and heft here that advertises strength and purpose, and when you have a Chinook in your pocket, you are mindful that it is there. You won't forget that you are carrying this in the heat of an emergency.

The second thing that is apparent about the Chinook is the very good workmanship. We have commented before in this column about the fact that the current generation of factory folders enjoys a level of workmanship that was available only on some custom knives just a few short years ago. The Chinook does not disappoint its owner in the regard, and can go toe-to-toe with its competition in the area and then some. Everything, and I mean everything on the Chinook works and feels as it should. Handle ergonomics are well thought out, and

sharp edges are beveled so that the knife is comfortable to use. The blade glides open and clicks shut with a satisfying bank-vault authority. While we would have preferred to see the Chinook as a liner lock, it is instead a lever lock. It is, however, a lever lock of substantial proportions that should be strong enough to handle whatever may come its way.

The handle scales of the Chinook are G10, impervious to nearly everything and virtually bulletproof. There is a very fine, even texturing to their surface that provides a really good grip, even when the knife is bloody or wet. Spyderco has equipped the Keating Chinook with a lanyard hole in the rear of the handle at the top. This is a useful feature for a tactical/outdoor folding knife, and is a bonus on the Chinook. The pocket clip on the Chinook is the primary carry, and is positioned so that the knife carries point down in the pocket. This puts the lanyard hole down in the bottom of the pocket when the pocket clip is being used, thus making it difficult if not impossible to use the lanyard option in conjunction with the pocket clip carry.

However, when the pocket is used to carry the knife, the Chinook is easily deployed as the fingers immediately engage the pivot point of the knife. The opening hole falls instantly into place, and the blade opens immediately and effortlessly without having to turn the knife in the hand so that you can accomplish the opening manipulations. The texturing of the scales aids in both drawing and opening the knife. The handle, pocket clip, and opening system work in concert to give easy access that is both reliable and totally ambidextrous. You also have the lanyard option that can be used if necessary.

Open and deployed, the Chinook is visually striking. It is big enough to be visible to an opponent, and has size enough to give a potential adversary pause to ponder the risk at hand. The flowing lines of the Bowie-style blade indicate that this is intended to be a serious knife on the street, and the size and heft impart a feeling of confidence to its user. The Spyderco Chinook has looks to burn, and is expertly crafted of first-rate materials.

We think Spyderco will sell a lot of these, and suspect that the linkage of James Keating and Spyderco will be a long and fruitful relationship.

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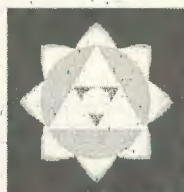
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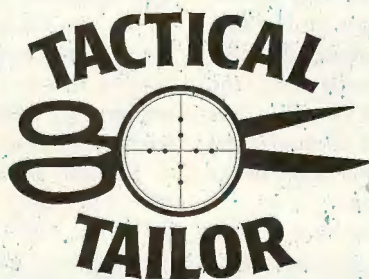
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TigerSharp Folders

When TigerSharp hit the market a couple years back with their Fixed Blade Hunting knife, it stuck us as one of the most merchantable ideas to come down the pike in a long time — and better than that, it worked just fine. In a couple seconds you could change a dulled blade for a factory-sharp one, and this can be important when you're dressing out large game in waning daylight. It's also a genuine plus for those among us who are as likely to dull a blade with a whetstone as they are to sharpen it (these are always wives or brothers-in-law, as we, of course, can put a hair-splitting edge on a tire iron with a brickbat). The idea of a changeable blade insert had been so adroitly engineered by TigerSharp that what might have only been a novelty hit the market as a mature and functional design.

Visiting with Steve Overholt at that SHOT Show back in '99, we asked him — about half in jest — “so, when's your folder coming out?” Steve just grinned and allowed as how they were working on it. Now, that's going to be a complicated proposition, we thought.

TigerSharp's new line of *folding* replaceable-insert knives is now on the market, and a clever line it is. Varying primarily in dimension and types/colors of anodized aluminum grip scales, this new series of folding TigerSharp knives walked away with the “2001 Imported Innovative Knife” award, and well-deserved it was.

At first glance, these new knives look like a very nicely wrought iteration of the usual liner-lock folder, with aluminum scales and a stainless pocket clip. But they are not: The ambidextrous thumb stud is actually the locking mechanism for the center replaceable blade insert. This replaceable blade insert is rather the same idea as the laminated Finnish blades, where the center of the blade can be hardened to the point of brittleness, but is backed on either side by softer, less brittle steel to prevent blade breakage. And like their original sheath knife, these folders are so precisely fit that you'd never know the center comes out without a close look.

The advantages are not merely that you can have a fresh



Martin Brass

On recent trip to Israel, SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown discusses merits of Sure-Fire high-intensity personal light (right) and the TigerSharp replaceable-insert knife (below) with men of the Israeli Border Police sniper school.

factory-sharp blade in a second or two, but also that you can have a *different configuration* blade in a second or two. Going from a smooth blade to a serrated — and back, as the work demands — is simply a matter of loosening the thumb stud and changing the blade. The closed dimensions of the various models are 3-1/4” for the Gentleman's frame, and 3-3/4” for the Multi-use frame; each comes with a plain and serrated blade, and of course, replacement blades are available.

Pictured here is the T5215R Neon, with a beautifully hi-tech demeanor and purposeful design. Once every decade or so in the knife business, somebody comes along with a benchmark improvement. Overholt's replaceable blade inserts, first in the fixed blade hunting knife and now in this ingeniously designed and flawlessly wrought folders, is just such an advance.

For the dealer nearest you, contact: TigerSharp, Dept. SOF, 4275 D.E.J. Drive, Missoula, MT 59803; phone: 888-711-8437; fax: 406-251-5671; on the web at www.tigersharp.com.



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Flak



A Green Line?

I don't mean to throw stones, but speaking of "World Sitrep" Sept. 2001 is inaccurate and onesided = Anti-Israel. Who is Richard Falk? I showed you where the most recent homes were destroyed, in the planned green park community area in the valley between the refugee camp and my neighborhood. It's the valley across which they shoot at us from time to time. The "homes" demolished were unoccupied and uninhabited, devoid of furniture, household or personal good or anything else (virtually empty shells). The "families" all had homes elsewhere and

it is in those homes they lived. They built illegally, knew it, in an area (set aside for a public park) that no legal process would have afforded them positive relief. And they had been recipient of years worth of municipal and legal notice and process. No one snuck up on them in the dead of night and gave them seven minutes to collect all their worldly goods and get out of the way of a dawn surprise destruction of the homes in which they lived leaving them homeless and all their possessions trashed.

Howard Linett
• Vie e-mail

Just for the record, this publication has always been pro-Israel. If the buildings shown to Col. Brown in Jerusalem were at the Shufat camp, they were dozed o/a 9 July, some time after the "World Sitrep" column was written and at the printers. What the column referenced were homes destroyed in the southern Gaza Strip last spring, as at the Brazil refugee camp (photo) last May 2nd. According to Agence France Presse some 7,000 have been demolished since that area was occupied, making some 40,000 homeless. Although there are no easy answers, it would seem to some at least, that among those 40,000 there will be those who are now ripe for recruitment into terrorist organizations. Swelling the ranks of such groups is not in anyone's best interest.

According to Matthew Rothschild of The Progressive, Richard Falk is "one of America's leading experts on human rights." Falk is a professor of international law at Princeton, and openly critical of certain aspects of Israeli policy in occupied areas.

And, He Has A Black Belt

The letter you published against President Mesic of Croatia, apparently contains one complaint of substance: that he has put professional soldiers in



charge of the Croatian Army. But that was long overdue, since former President (and Yugoslav People's Army General) Tudman had promoted professional singers, sycophants,

and autobus drivers to the rank of general while sidelining former YPA officers in spite of the fact they had joined the nascent Croatian Army as soon as they could and that, like Air Force General Antun Tus, actually saved Croatia's military fortunes in that fateful summer of 1991. All former YPA officers performed gallantly, whereas several of the aforementioned singers, sycophants and autobus drivers took part in criminal activities to the extent (like Mario Cerkez or Murko Norac) of committing mass murder against innocent civilians.

A Frenchman with a passionate hatred for socialism, and no connection whatever with the former Yugoslavia, I have embraced the cause of Croatia's freedom to the extend of helping publish two books in French on Croatia's history, learning the Croatian language and writing furious screeds to newspapers against anything smacking of Serbolshevik propaganda. I regularly read (admittedly social-democrat) Croatian magazines, and listen to Croatian radio several hours a day. I can assure you that there is nothing true in Mr. Dodich's accusation about Serpe Mesic being a Communist or Yugo-nostalgic. A black belt in Nanbudo, Mr. Mesic is an honest, straightforward, outspoken and quick-tempered man who did nothing to the former Communists — and now moderate Social-Democrats — in power: The Croatian voters did that in December 1999, before he was elected. But he restored the international standing of Croatia after the former government drove her into isolation by refusing to hand over Croatian war criminals to The Hague Tribunal or put them on trial. The ousted pseudo-nationalist



REUTERS/Deemond Boylan

A Palestinian schoolgirl is reflected in a mirror in the Brazil refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip after her house was flattened by Israeli bulldozers during an incursion on 2 May 2001. One Palestinian fighter was killed and 14 people injured as Israeli troops, backed by tanks and bulldozes, destroyed 13 houses and agricultural sheds in a raid, as they battled dozens of Palestinians armed with rocket launchers, grenades and automatic weapons.

HDZ party is simply trying to manipulate the issue of Croatian war criminals with ignorant veterans and apparently ill-informed Croatian expats in order to facilitate its return to power.

This will not help and Croatia is, basically, on the right track towards, as they say in Croatia "Euro-Atlantic integration." But you have, for the second time in several months, been the unwitting accomplice of Communist-style misinformation on former Yugoslav issues. Where was Mr. Dodich when you published that outrageous heap of Serbolshevik lies against the Kosovo war? And where was your own common sense when you decided to publish a denunciation against a faithful U.S. ally which was so obviously short on facts? This really puts a question mark on your credibility.

Francois Guillaumat
Paris

Well, thank you for your furious screech, which was the only contrary response we received to Mr. Dodich's letter. Although we do not often use this column as a forum for debate, especially with those who regards us as accomplices to Communist-style disinformation, it

will be interesting to see what response your letter generates.

Continued Fiction ...



I was only a R.E.M.F. and I am now merely a student of military history but Capt. Bailey in his SOF article, and Dick Marcinko (in his book *Rogue Warrior*) tell

about the same incident but the versions are very different.

In the SOF story, Bailey says, "this event was so breathtakingly courageous that it was only through the neglect of the on-scene SEAL platoon commander that Thornton and Humphries received a mere mention of the event in the Bronze Star citations for their actions during the Tet '68 offensive. As Dix observed to me, 'I told [the SEAL platoon commander] that Harry and Frank did everything I did, and if I got an award they should get the same thing.' The officer obviously did not heed Dix' observation."

On page 163 of his book, Marcinko says, "The one thing I don't understand

about that was that Harry and Doc Nixon were with Drew [Dix] the whole time — and all they ever got was Bronze Stars. That made me wonder whether the criteria were higher for SEALs than they were for Green Berets."

As you can see, there is a discrepancy between the accounts. If I am not mistaken, Marcinko was the platoon leader mentioned in Bailey's article. Could you help me understand what really happened and who short sheeted whom in this famous rescue of Nurse Maggie.

J.C. Cullom
Via e-mail

Larry Bailey responds: *Dick Marcinko's Rogue Warrior is regarded more for its fiction than its history. The reason Harry Humphries and Frank Thornton (vice Doc Nixon, as he did not participate in the Maggie rescue) did not receive the Medal of Honor (or at least the Navy Cross) is, quite simply, because Marcinko did not recommend them for it.*

Among other egregious lies in Rogue Warrior is Marcinko's tale of how Ted Risher was killed during Tet '68. Ted, a personal friend of mine, was actually setting up a firing position on the roof of a

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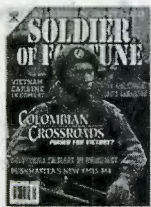


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building when a VC sniper shot him. Marcinko was not even in the area, choosing instead to remain in the Tactical Operations Center in Chau Duc, vice accompanying his men on the hazardous missions in which they were involved.

Interestingly, Risher's family recently contacted me about their brother's death, and they were overjoyed to learn that Ted had died a warrior's death, rather than that of some mind-blown "ultimate warrior" intent on winning the war by himself. They are not in the least happy with Marcinko's libelous account of a good man's sacrifice. The door might not be closed on this incident.

Back On The Border



I just read your current magazine. The article on the ranchers and the border patrol was particularly interesting. I work for the BP in Texas. You guys would be amazed by some of

the stuff that happens that never sees the light of day. We had an agent respond to a call where a Texas Ranger had two Mexican soldiers on the U.S. side in their underwear, and were obvi-

ously doing a recon for some future drug traffic. The Texas Ranger stopped them and held them for the Border Patrol agents. When the agents went to apprehend the two Mexican soldiers, they noticed many more soldiers on the Mexican side of the river. Those on the Mexican side lined up in a firing line and pointed their rifles at the agents. The agents had to let the soldiers go or they would have gotten shot to hell.

This happened within the last three years, and even though it does not happen all of the time, we know that the Mexican soldiers provide protection for a lot of the drug traffic coming through our sector.

One night, a drug runner drops a radio, the agent that picks it up can hear a Mexican Police officer saying in Spanish, "The Migra [BP agent] is coming towards the landing."

You guys should do some articles on the stories that never get told. An article on the fucked-up supervision would also be good. We have so much paperwork to do that we cannot patrol our areas. We have to do a lot of paperwork even when we are going to let someone go out of the door. These OTMs (other than Mexicans) just show up, and if they are a family group with minors, they usually walk.

I would love to see some stuff on this, and if you have any questions, then maybe I could answer them — anonymously of course! I am just a small fish in the BP pond, but I do want to see things change for the better.

(name, rank and serial number withheld)

No Merc Work Lebanon

I am a former National Guardsman who served in two combat units from 1976 to 1981 here in the states. My primary MOS was a direct fire infantryman, and as a Kansas National Guardsman I served in a 4.2 mortar unit. My Oklahoma unit was a TOW missile crew. I am a straight leg infantryman who savors real action in Lebanon. Please give me inside information about Lebanon and find out if there is hot action over there and give me also inside info how I can do merc work over there.

Sam
Nebraska

Here's the inside scoop: There is no merc work in Lebanon. ☒



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WORLD SITREP



1

UNITED STATES

Lethal "Booster": *The Guardian* reports, "The illness known as Gulf War Syndrome looks likely to have been caused by an illegal vaccine "booster" given by the Ministry [Department] of Defense to protect soldiers against biological weapons, according to the results of a new series of tests. Scientists in the United States found that symptoms of the illness were the same for service personnel who received the injections whether or not they served in the Gulf." • **His Own Private Army?** The \$676 million USD Andean Counterdrug Initiative would allow President Bush to deploy however many civilian trainers (mostly former servicemen) as he chose. That suspicion has been fueled by report commissioned by U.S. Air Force from Rand Corporation think-tank, which says "drugs and insurgency are intertwined in complicated and changing ways, but the former cannot be addressed without the latter." It concludes that efforts to reduce the drug supply in Colombia have been ineffective because America has focused more on 'counter-narcotics' than 'counter-insurgency' aid. "We are worried that this new legislation would give the President sole control over a private army in the Andean region without any accountability to Congress," Nadeam Elshami, staffer with Democratic Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, told *The Observer* last week. ... "It's a back-door way of escalating our involvement in the Andean region and providing additional money to private military contractors who have not been effective."

4

COLOMBIA

General's Assessment: U.S. Congressional Report states that Brigadier General Gustavo Socha, Director of Antinarcotics police (DANTI), recently explained during a multi-media presentation how precursor chemicals from U.S. and Europe are entering Colombia and also that U.S. and Europe are two largest consumers of finished products. "General Socha showed how his police officers are combating the problem through active interdiction methods, including spraying crops, raiding the labs, arresting those responsible and extraditing some to the United States for prosecution." He reported that the CNP [Colombia National Police] has lost 5,108 Policemen since 1990 in the war on Drugs. "The strong working relationship between our DEA and the Colombian National Police for the past 18 years was clearly evident in the presentation." • **Arianna Huffington Predicts:** 300-man cap established for personnel from DynCorp, Airscan and Military Professional Resources, Inc. likely to be lifted. Military personnel cap is now 500. • **"By The Time I Get [Back] To Phoenix":** RAND Report says leader of AUG (United Self-Defense Groups of Colombia) is sadistic scoundrel whose paramilitaries are copying tactics straight out of CIA's Phoenix Program ops manual.

1

5

4

9

5

MEXICO

Su Amigo, Mi Amigo: Bush Administration is strengthening ties between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement. This cooperation, however, will do little to aid border situation where cartels are also forming alliances with each other, and with international crime organizations. Mexico earns \$30 billion annually from drug-trafficking and accounts for two-thirds of cocaine smuggled into U.S.

9

PERU

No Surprise Here: CIA admits from 1990 thru 2000 it funneled at least \$10M USD to Peruvian spymaster, Vladimiro Montesinos (founder and head of a counter-narcotics unit within the SIN), National Intelligence Service. Some, perhaps most, of the loot turned up in Vladimiro's pockets.

2**MACEDONIA**

Bracing For Civil War: 3,500 NATO troops will have hands full taking on NLA personnel, Albanian Mafia *et al.* War is imminent. How long it will last is only question.

3**CHECHNYA**

Gutsy Heroine: Phoned-in to *SOF* is report that 15-year-old girl grabbed an AK and, in self-defense, shot and killed a Chechen rebel commander. Young lady is recovering in hospital from severe beating.

6**RUSSIA**

Building Bridges: Vladimir Putin and North Korea's Kim Jong II agree on linking inter-Korean railway with Trans-Siberian Railroad and reconstructing North Korea's heavy industries.

7**IRAQ**

"Cubanization?" Many call on Bush to end embargo against Iraq, citing failure of U.S. policy against Cuba. • **I Like Russia:** Since Russia blocked joint Britain-U.S. sanctions overhaul, Saddam says Russia to get priority contracts.

8**THAILAND**

Calling Uncle "Sap": With political corruption and drug-trafficking topping epidemic proportions, call is out for American assistance. DEA, though, is cautious, citing aforementioned corruption. Relations with Myanmar are near all-time low since that nation is source of large percentage of heroin and "speed" now taking heavy toll on Thai population. • **U.S. Advisors On The Ground:** Some 40 Special Forces personnel from Fort Bragg, NC, are entrenched in northern Thailand conducting counter-narcotics ops.

10**ALGERIA**

The Best Is From The U.S.: America's largest Arab trading partner now wants to purchase weapons ... and wants American trainers for its military.

3**11****ZIMBABWE**

Civilian Grumbling: Petrol prices rise 74 percent. Food riots and hot tempers might lead to much worse.

8**13****12****AUSTRALIA**

Told Ya So: Since gun shutdown, crime has risen. As in the U.S., no stats are made public regarding number of crimes that are prevented by law-abiding gunowners. These stats bear repeating: During 12 months since 640,000 personal firearms were surrendered (at a taxpayers' cost of \$500 million USD) homicides are now up 3.2 percent; assaults up 8.6 percent; armed robberies up 44 percent. In state of Victoria, firearms-related homicides are up 300 percent! Figures for 25 years showed decrease in armed robberies with firearms. Unarmed prey had better pray.

13**VIETNAM**

Just Trust Us: Officials promise friendly repatriation for 300 Montagards and other minority tribespeople now in sanctuary in Cambodia. UNHCR says without access for its personnel into Central Highlands to monitor Vietnamese actions it will not approve repatriation.

World Sitrep is compiled by the *SOF* staff with information from various media and correspondents.



I Was There

BY JASMINA SPAHIC

Siege And Slaughter

The street was a river of blood. Pieces of meat were everywhere. Because we were without power I did not hear about the Serb shells in the old town square of Kapija, in Tuzla, until the next morning. When I got there the dead and wounded had been carried away, but it was still terrible. I would have been there that night, but my mother made me stay home and study.

Seventy-one young people were killed, and 150 wounded. A boy who was a neighbor was killed. I knew him very well. He was so nice. A boy who had dated me was killed, too. His mother hasn't spoken since 25 May 1995, when the shells fell.

The grave of a four-year-old boy in the Tuzla Children's Memorial Cemetery is especially meaningful to me. My little brother is about the same age, and I understand the grief his

family must have felt. I try to remember their names and faces. I try to remember the children so they will always live in my memory. I hope that something like this will not happen to anyone.

Why did so many children have to die before the international community could take action?

A soldier who was on the front lines all the time came here for rest. He went downtown with his friends, and was killed. All that time on the front lines, and he is killed drinking coffee and enjoying himself.

The Serbs had fired two shells, 15 minutes apart. They knew that young people liked to sit outside the cafes or walk in the evening, so that is why they fired then — to kill more people. They killed Serbs and Croats, too, not just Muslims. The gun that was used is the one outside the war museum.

Most of the young people are buried in the Children's Memorial Cemetery. I am a tour guide group leader for American soldiers from nearby Eagle Base. I am 23, and a Muslim. Tuzla is a city of about 150,000 people, 120 kilometers north of Sarejevo.

We take the soldiers through the Children's Memorial Cemetery as part of their day-off tour in Tuzla. I want Americans to understand what happened that night when the Serbs deliberately targeted children. The Tuzla tour is not always sad. I know American soldiers are tired and a long way from home, and they miss their families, so I try to make them happy for a day.

I don't mind American soldiers being here. They can stay as long as they like. I like the peace. I was just 16 when the war began, a struggle that lasted three years. My father, Rasim, was away with the army all that time, in the infantry. In the Yugoslav Army he had been trained as a sniper. When the war started his unit wanted him to work again as a sniper but he did not want to do that. He said he couldn't kill a man who was just walking around. He fought at the Tuzla front, and Brcko, and Dobo.

We were under siege from 1993 until March 1994. We lived on beans and cornbread every day and were happy to have it. We can still feel



The author briefs U.S. troops on the history of the Balkans conflict — and provides an enlightening glimpse into regional cultures.

the consequences of the hunger. Many people do not feel well today. I think the siege may have affected my health, too. There was no power, and no water. My sister and I had to carry water for a kilometer. Once artillery shells landed on the road close to my sister, Marima, and me. Marima couldn't talk or stop shaking for several hours.

We gathered wood on the hill above our house for the stove. Sometimes I was so tired and depressed I wanted to die.

A kilo (2.2 lbs.) of sugar cost 60 marks (about \$36). A package of coffee was 160 marks (about \$97) and a kilo of white flour cost the same. An egg was a mark (about \$.62). We picked wild plants like spinach and onions in the fields. Sometimes we got humanitarian agency flour and rice. Sometimes we tried mixing flour and rice. We made lots of experiments. You never know what will become important. I learned to appreciate what is important — power, water, food, sugar, flour, white bread, even potatoes. Everything you didn't have, but had before, became special.

For six months 25 refugees lived in our house. I had to sleep in a neighbor's house. They were cousins from Zvornik, a city to the east, where I was born. The Serbs killed a lot of people there and took their houses. Most of the people who lived in Zvornik now live in Austria, Germany, and the U. S., where I have two aunts in St. Louis.

There was a Serb family we knew a long time just across the road. One day they just disappeared. Every Serb in Tuzla received a letter saying if they left on a weekend they could come back Monday. They could have everything if they came back. Nobody knows where the letters came from, but I heard about them many times. Last year when I was working with UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) in Bijeljina I saw my neighbor, but he didn't want to say hello. Now he lives in a Muslim's house, and a Muslim lives in his.

I think Serbs should return to their homes, and Muslims to theirs.

I respect very much the Serbs who stayed here. We can't say all Serbs are bad. There are no nationalities for me. It's important what kind of person you are.

When I worked with UNHCR we bussed refugees back to their homes and Serbs threatened me several times. Once in Vlasznica a Serb told me he was going to kill me by cutting my throat. I asked him if he could wait until I had finished eating. His intimidation failing,

he walked away.

There were many Serbs in Tuzla in that time, during the war. They trusted the mayor, Selim Beslagic, but they did not trust Radovan Karadzic, and Slobodan Milosevic, who just wanted a big Serbia — with *only* Serbs. Muslims and Croats would just be slaves, and their houses and everything they owned would be taken away. The war was not about ethnic or religious conflicts. Croations, Serbs, and Muslims have lived together for centuries. It was a war of aggression for Serbia on Bosnia.

Radovan Karadzic is one of the Serb politicians. There is no words that can describe him except that he is horrible. He is behind the Serb invasion of Bosnia, and the horrendous ethnic cleansing.

Slobodan Milosevic also wanted ethnic cleansing of Muslims and Croats. He doesn't care so much about Bosnian Serbs — he just used them.

Because Americans are here there is no more war; no more shelling caused by these war criminals. I want to thank the American Army and American people for everything they have done for us.

Jasmina Spahic is one of the newest residents of the Lone Star State.

A New — And Just — American

On 5 November 1999, during a tour in Bosnia, I was in Tuzla's Children's Memorial Cemetery, looking at the names and photographs of some of the 71 young people killed by Serb shells one night in May 1995. A beautiful young Muslim woman walked up to me and said that I had the look of someone who had been many places and had a lot of stories to tell. She said her name was Jasmina and she was one of the tour guides for our day in Tuzla. She said she wanted me to be in her tour group. She wanted to be my guide. She still is.

And so an old soldier who had indeed seen some war zones, and a young woman who was a child of war became friends that day. When Jasmina

Continued on page 75

NEW*

***Yes, and it's over 50 years old!**

As seen on



A **Mauser 98K**, Model M48, the strongest and safest of bolt action rifles, made on German tooling set up by the Germans in occupied Yugoslavia during WWII.

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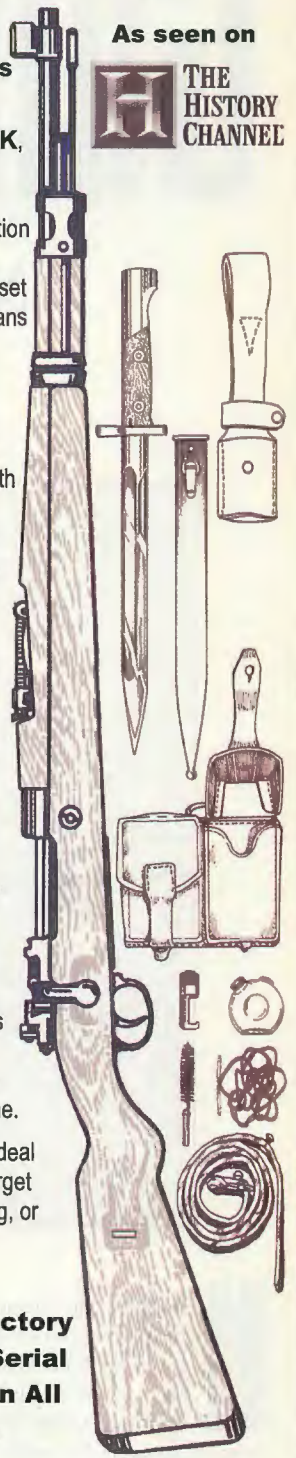
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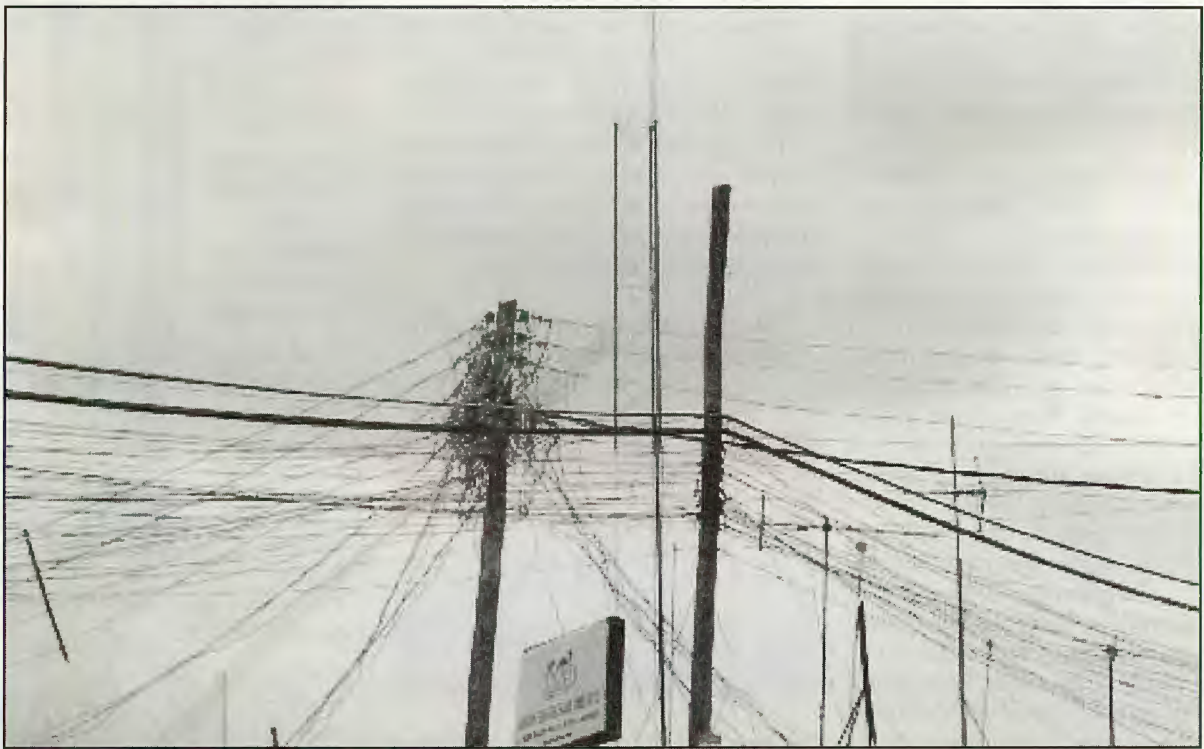
Dealer inquiries also invited



Gullible's Travels

Nigerians Fleece Unwary of Billions

BY FRANK HOPKINS



It boggles the mind. The propagandist's Big Lie technique carried to its logical — if crudest — extreme: a scam so bald-faced the only thing going for it is the fact some credulous individuals will think no one would attempt such a transparent confidence game, ergo it must be for real. Further stretching one's faith in the Universal Common Sense Gene is the fact that so many who have been intelligent enough to amass sufficient funds to be a target of such street-level, childish schemes are at once so gullible as to lose it to same.

Perhaps they inherited the money, or perhaps this unabashed appeal to their Greed Gene struck a dominant chord in an otherwise rational mind. But the result is that their money went to Nigeria, where during the past decade billions have been scammed from the gullible in virtually all industrialized countries. With the obvious rationale of going where the money is, the Nigerian scammers have primarily targeted the U.K. the United States, Canada, Australia and



Oh what a tangled web we weave ... Telecommunications in Nigeria can be an uncertain thing, but one thing for certain is that a great deal of the outgoing traffic is by scammers tempting the unwary to part with their money in fraudulent get-rich-quick schemes.

New Zealand, although they have targeted businessmen in virtually every country on earth. Over the last three years, New York postal authorities have confiscated an average of 2 million pieces of "419" (named for the section of Nigerian criminal code) mail a year from Nigeria. The U.S. Secret Service Financial Crimes Division averages a hundred calls and 300-500 written inquiries a day from Americans approached or defrauded by Nigerian scammers. "Nigerian organized crime rings running fraud schemes through the mail and phone lines are now so large, they represent a serious financial threat to the country [United States]," notes the Secret Service. One fourth of all major fraud cases investigated by the Secret Service now involve Nigerians. American embassy officials say half the DHL, FedEx and UPS shipments to Nigeria are returned because of fraud and theft.

Those with a business fax or a published business e-mail address — or even just a commercial snail-mail address in the

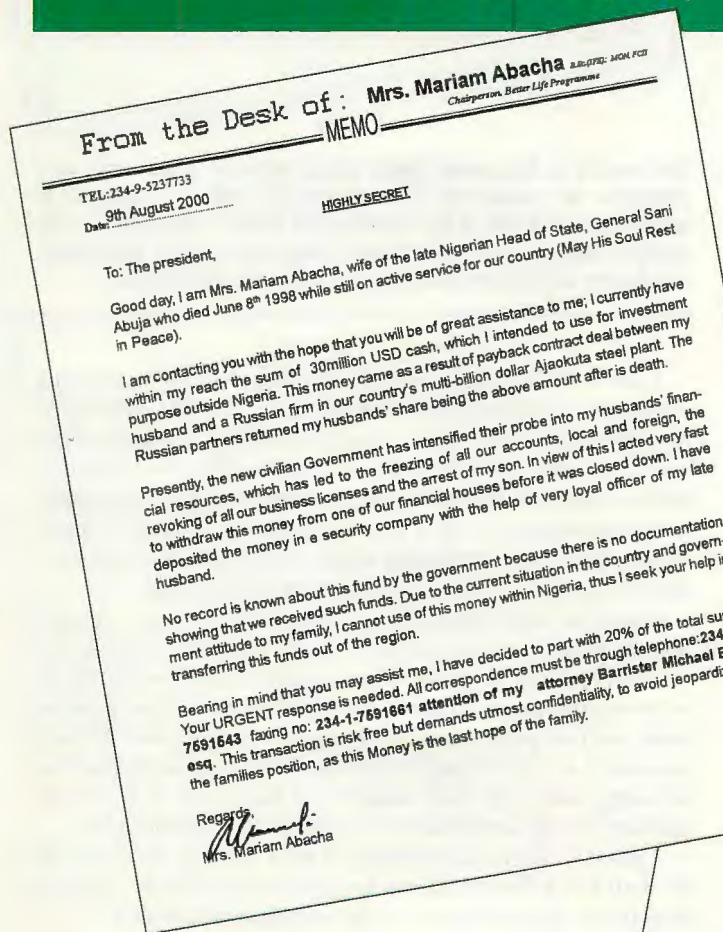
case of the scam artists who are willing to invest an actual stamp (although they often as not use counterfeit Nigerian stamps, on mail that is surreptitiously placed in the stream of overseas mail) — have been receiving enticing offers to accept millions merely for assisting the scammers transfer their supposedly ill-gotten — but non-existent — gains out of Nigeria. Terms, amounts and particulars vary, but most often revolve around the premise that the principals have discovered some virtually forgotten funds in Nigerian government coffers, which can be yours to share if only you will let them know precisely which bank account you want it sent to. Uh-huh ...

And It's Big Business

How big? According to Adkisson Consulting, it's Nigeria's third largest industry. And, bearing in mind that the electronic media is now used in preference for its speed and economy, published reports in Nigeria noted that 6.7 million

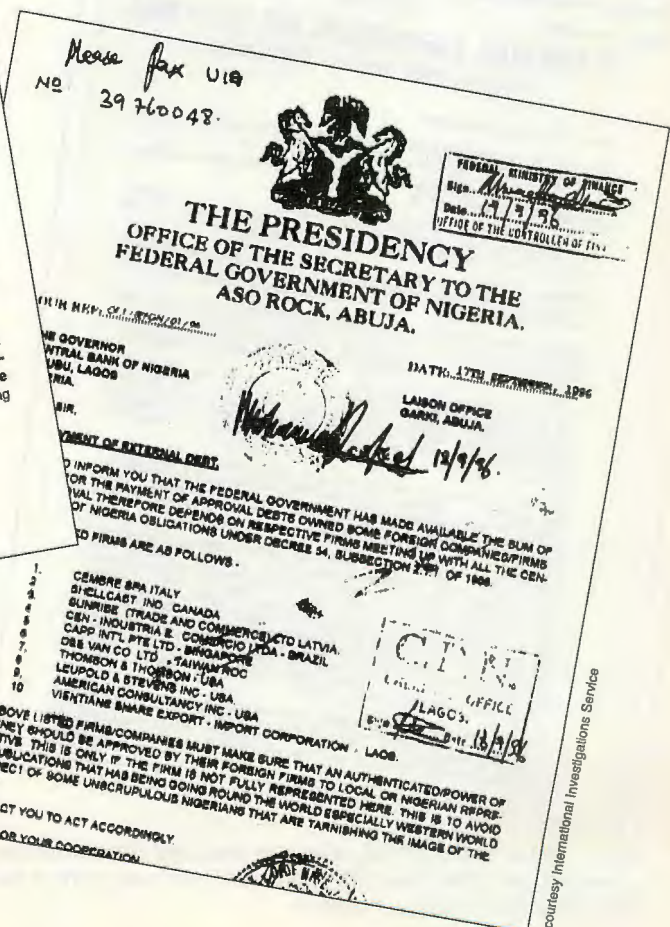
**We're looking at a Mt. Everest of fraud.
Nobody comes close to being as good as the Nigerians.**

— Bruce Townsend, Chief, Secret Service Financial Crimes Division



(above) SOF received this plea last year, unfortunately we never responded, so missed out on the \$30 million.

(right) If the mark takes the bait — whatever the format of the scam — they are deluged with official-looking documents assuring them everything is moving ahead, and that there are megamillions just around the corner.



courtesy International Investigations Service

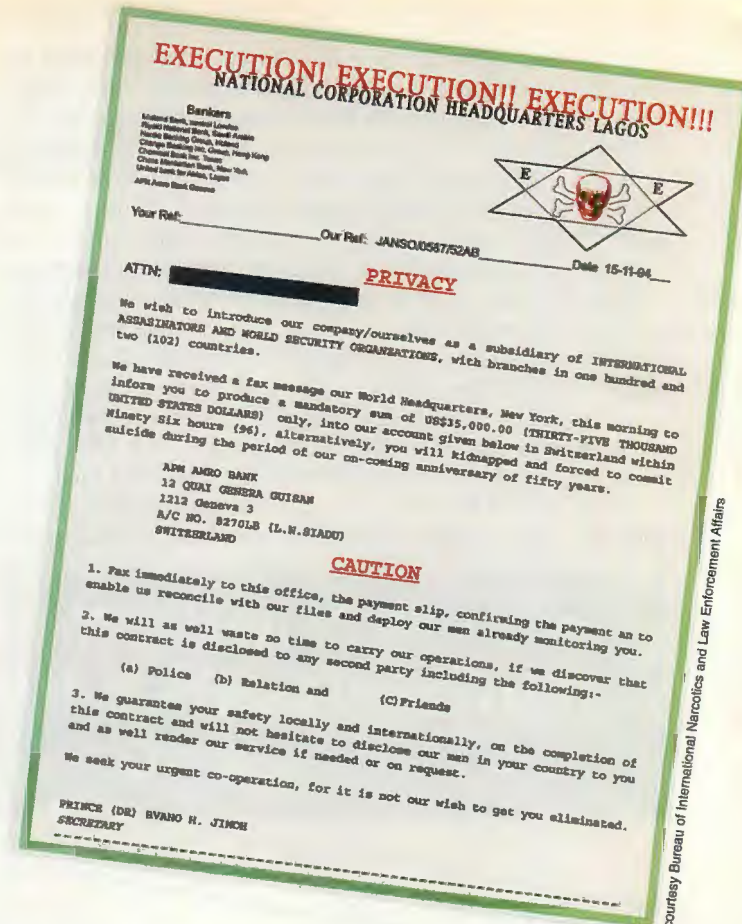
letters written by connen were said to have been confiscated within the past few years. In Nigeria itself, where for a variety of reasons law enforcement is not a universal matter, some 3 million letters were discovered in a hideout in single find: A syndicate comprising employees of the Nigerian Customs Service, the Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria, and the Nigerian Postal Service were believed to be behind this particular batch of scam letters.

In acknowledgement that Nigeria has scant to offer the world except oil, the bulk of these schemes have to do with orphaned oil funds. As a nice touch, these are usually characterized as somehow left-over or misdirected spoils from a previous, corrupt Nigerian government, which could have been most any since the end of British rule. (Of course, you would feel no guilt in winnowing the spoils of a corrupt dictator, would you. I mean, the folks have already been robbed, and you're only robbing the robber, you Robin Hood, you ...)

Typical of the Nigerian oil-fund scams is this one currently making the rounds of the internet:

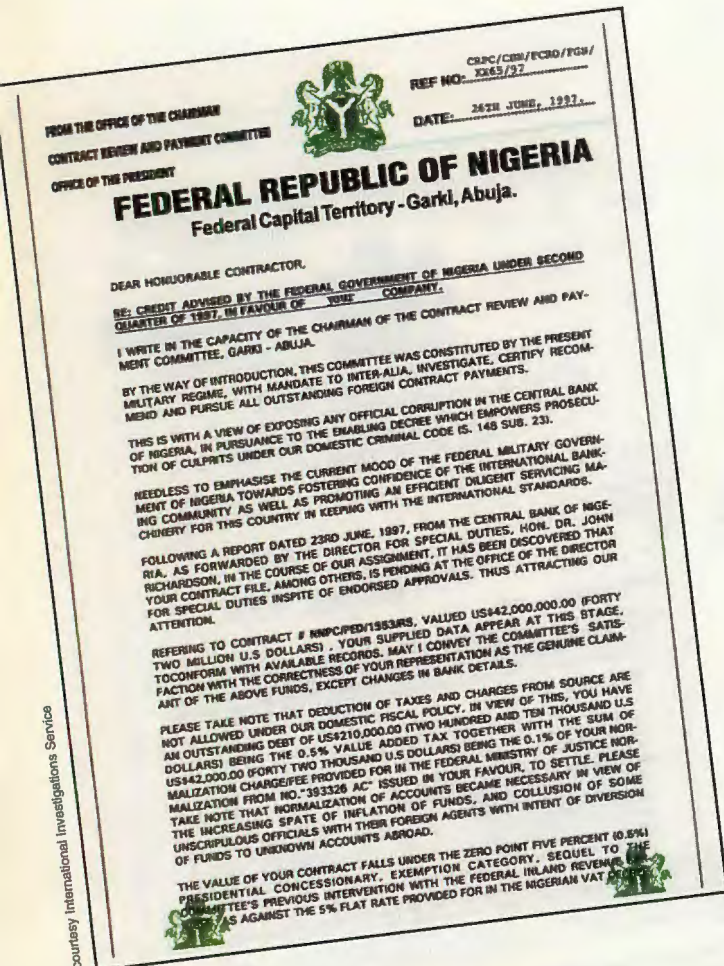
URGENT BUSINESS PROPOSAL

This letter may come to you as a surprise since it is coming from someone you have not met before. However, we decided to contact you based on a satisfactory information we had about your business person as regard business information concerning your country and the safety of our funds in a steady economy such as that of your country compared to our country Nigeria Africa.



courtesy Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

Sent mostly to Europeans, these bogus extortion letters offer your protection for reasonable fees of only \$35,000 — a pittance to what some have lost to the advance-fee frauds. Although it is not known if anybody ever actually sent these extortionists any money, it is known that no one was ever hurt because they did not.



courtesy International Investigations Service

Again, whatever the format, after the hook and the affirmation, comes the news there are certain niceties to be taken care of that require the opening of your wallet.

I am a civil adviser currently working with the monitoring committee overseeing the winding up of the petroleum trust fund (PTF). Myself and my close and trusted colleagues need your assistance in the transfer of US\$25 million into any reliable account you may nominate overseas. This fund was generated from over-invoicing of contracts executed by the PTF under the administration of the past military government. These were discovered while we were reviewing the PTF accounts.

From our discoveries, these contracts have been executed and the contractors in question were all paid. The difference of US \$25,000,000 being the over-invoiced amount in the funds, we want your corporate entity to help us receive. What we want from you is a good and reliable company or personal Account into which we shall transfer this fund. Details should include the following: name of bank, address of bank with fax and tel, account, beneficiary/signatory to account (account name),

Upon the successful crediting of your account, the fund will be shared as follows: 20% for you and your assistance, 75% for myself and my colleagues, 5% for contingency expenses.

Please, after your first reply through e-mail I will want us to continue further communication by fax and telephone for confidential purpose. We wish to assure you that your involvement should you decide to assist us, will be well protected, and also, this business proposal is 100% risk free as we have put a whole lot into it.

Dr. Francis Foday

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**FOREIGN EXCHANGE
AFFIRMATION/APPROVAL ON FORM 'A'**

REFERENCE TO YOUR LETTER FOR FOREIGN EXCHANGE FORM 'A', WE BY CONFIRM THE APPROVAL OF THE SUM 'A' TO REMIT THE SUM OF 00,000,00 (THIRTY MILLION) DOLLARS ONLY. CONTRACT NO: NNPC/PEH/07676/R.89 FOR THE SUPPLY, COMMISSIONING 0,000 MONAX AXIAL FRAME POLYPROPYLENE PLANTS 150,000 S. F. FOR KADUNA REFINERY PIPELINE RECONSTRUCTION AND COMPUTERIZATION FOR PLANT 'A' TO 'D' AT KADUNA REFINERY.

THE VERACITY OF THE ABOVE COMPANY CONTRACT IS SAID TO BE CORRECT.

INTERNATIONAL REMITTANCE OFFICE
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TINUBU SQUARE, LAGOS.

DATE: 18 - 09 - 97.
TIME: 1.45PM, CSM

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE AMOUNT OF (31,600,000) US\$ HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO YOUR ACCOUNT, FROM THE CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA THROUGH OUR CORRESPONDENT BANK, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK NEW YORK, N.Y. THE VALUE DATE IS 25/09/97. ALL OTHER CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE SENT TO YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE TELEX CONFIRMATION WOULD BE SENT TO YOU IN THE COURSE.

KINDLY CHECK EVERY CORRESPONDENCE IF NOT CORRECT, PLEASE CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY.

YOURS FAITHFULLY,
FOR: REMITTANCE DIRECTOR,
REDACTED
VILLSON AROUNA, NIG.

But! Don't lose hope: Here's a payment guarantee, a foreign exchange approval, and a confirmation: Your check's in the mail! What did you say your Visa card number was?

My Dear Doctor:

It was with considerable pleasure that I received your kind missive. I was particularly pleased you investigated my reliability and received satisfactory reports. I showed this to my wife, who has always maintained I am not reliable at all.

I want to help you with your oil funds project, and 20% of \$25,000,000 for five minutes work strikes me as reasonable, particularly since this is 100% risk free. Please send the money to the Left Bank of the Mississippi, account No. 710-773HS. (The account number, which is highly confidential, is in code. To read, hold upside down.)

Your friend,
Frank

The requested banking information has been used by more astute scammers to drain said accounts, but as the Secret Service notes, it is of more use to the scammers to ascertain that the mark does indeed have, or can access, funds worth going after. Like trial lawyers, these bottom-feeders will deign to pursue a target only if it is collectible. In other words, the scammers need to know if the mustard seeds of inquiry they have cast upon the electronic wind like pollen, have indeed landed in fertile soil. Often they ask for blank letterhead, again to prove you are worthy of plucking, and the letterhead comes in handy when they forge a letter to get a U.S. visa.

Of course, if helping drain the coffers left over from a corrupt and recently deposed military dictatorship does

Got Bilk?
Victim's Blood Good to the Last Drop

Once targeted, getting completely shed of a scammer is like getting rid of crab lice with pliers. In a contemptuous twist that well illustrates the sulfurous pit of cynicism from which boil these fraud artists, Interpol now reports that earlier victims are subsequently being contacted, but this time by "law-enforcement" or "commercial collection" agencies investigating the fraud... and offering to get the victim's money back — for an advance fee, of course!

—F.H.

(from the desk of: Mrs. Mariam Abacha [Chairperson, Better Life Programme])

HIGHLY SECRET

Good day, I am Mrs. Mariam Abacha, wife of the late Nigerian Head of State, General Sani Abuja who dies June 8th 1998 while still on active service for our country (May His Soul Rest In Peace).

I am contacting you with the hope that you will be of great assistance to me; I currently have within my reach the sum of 30 million USD cash, which I intend to use for investment purpose outside Nigeria. This money came as a result of payback contract deal between my husband and a Russian firm in our country's multi-billion dollar Ajaokuta steel plant. The Russian partners returned my husband's share being the above amount after his death.

Presently, the new civilian Government has intensified their probe into my husband's financial resources, which had led to the freezing of all our accounts, local and foreign, the revoking of all our business licenses and the arrest of my son. In view of this I acted very fast to withdraw this money from one of our financial houses before it was closed down. I have deposited the money in a security company with the help of very

loyal officer of my late husband.

No record is known about this fund by the government because there is no documentation showing that we received such funds. Due to the current situation in the country and government attitude to my family, I cannot use of this money within Nigeria, thus I seek your help in transferring this funds out of the region.

Bearing in mind that you may assist me, I have decided to part with 20% of the total sum. Your URGENT response is needed. All correspondence must be through telephone 234-1-7591543 faxing no: 234-1-7591661 attention of my attorney Barrister Michael Ede esq, This transaction is risk free but demands utmost confidentiality, to avoid jeopardizing the families position, as this money is the last hope of the family.

Regards,
Mrs. Mariam Abacha

My Dear Madam Abacha,

Since your Russian colleagues have demonstrated their honor in forwarding the funds as pre-agreed, even after the untimely death of the late General (may his soul please rest in peace), perhaps you may engage them to help you in this matter. I would, ordinarily, be pleased to help you, but have been engaged by another consortium. Between waiting for my call from Ed McMahon and counting my money from the consortium, I will be too busy to give your problem its proper attention. You may forward the funds to: Banko Mafiya, Attn: I.M. Sonnoffavitch, Moscow.

Your friend,
Frank

We have read dozens of variations on the Ms. Abacha letter, plus several purporting to be from other wives (African dictators, you understand, are allowed as many as they like), or orphaned sons, former trusted associates, etc.

Although slippery oil dealings in Nigeria are the most common stage setting, it might as well be other forbidden leftovers from corrupt minor Nigerian officials involving any nature of commerce, and instead of involving the crooked ex-dictator, you have been solicited by pretenders who say they are the crooked little minions of the new, civilian government.

And the venue is not limited to Nigeria. Good but desperate folks in Ivory Coast could use a little help, as well. And are willing to share with you ("Sir," "The President," or "Managing Director/CEO") because they have checked you out and know you are worthy of their trust, they just forgot to get your name when they checked you out:

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

It is my pleasure to write to you after much consideration since telephone communication can not be suitable enough to communicate to you at first. Being the only son of my father, late Mr. Michael Dorman from Kwatanatal Zulu in Republic of South Africa (SA) I am 26 years of age.

My father was limited liability Cocoa and Gold merchant in Johannesburg South Africa before his untimely death. After his business trip to Abidjan — Cote d'Ivoire, to negotiate on a cocoa and gold business he wanted to invest in Abidjan — Cote d'Ivoire. A week after he came back from Abidjan, he was attacked with my mother by unknown assassins, which my mother died instantly but my father died after five days in a private hospital on that faithful afternoon.

Litany of Scams

With different strokes for different blokes, the 419 scammers offer an à la carte menu with something for everyone. They include:

Money Transfer: Operator has millions in ill-gotten gains, will share with you for use of your account to put it in; problems will arise and they need your \$ assistance ...

Fraudulent Order: Operator places some small token orders with good checks, then hits you with an emergency order with a counterfeit cashier's check; you ship before it clears.

Charitable Donation: Operator wants to contribute millions to your church or charity, but will need a little help to do so.

Government Contract: Operator "has government contract," needs your company's expertise ... and hundreds of thousands for fees and bribes.

Crude Oil: Operator claims to have allocation of oil to sell you — cheap. Just needs money for fees, bribes, etc. etc. — whatever you will put up with.

Business Opportunity: Operator invites you to Nigeria to explore business opportunity; once there you are subjected to various extortions, threats, ransom demands, etc.

Black Money: Operator shows you trunks full of money coated black, needs up to \$180,000 for chemicals to clean it, then it's yours. Often worked in conjunction with other scams, in final gleaning of mark who thinks he's finally getting his money.

Real Estate: Operator doesn't own it, or it's not for sale, forged documents and the usual drill: Brooklyn Bridge scam with a twist.

Clearinghouse: To add credibility, operators often use non-Nigerians as a clearinghouse to receive payment from you, to launder funds, etc. Dummy companies with no function.

Extortion/Protection Racket: You get message (see sample) threatening your life. If you're simple enough, you send them money. No record of threats carried out offshore.

And Other Retreads: Watch for all the usual confidence games to be adapted to the Nigerian situation, and old scams recycled in other venues in West Africa (Ivory Coast, Benin, etc.) as the international heat is turned up on Nigeria.

The common denominator is: In every case, no matter how rosy the prospects are — and at the onset they are very rosy — eventually there will develop a glitch that requires you to cough up some money to save the operation ... And once you do, things will start a cycle of hope, then more problems that require your money. Soon you are trying to save the money you lost by throwing good money after it. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it is! Just say no to thugs ... it's an absolute defense for your wallet.
— F.H.

I didn't know that my father was going to leave me after I had lost my mother. But before he gave up the ghost, it was as if he knew he was going to die. He, my father MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PERFECT PEACE he disclosed to me that he deposited the sum of \$18,300,000.00 US Dollars (eighteen million

three hundred thousand dollars) in a security company in Abidjan — Cote d'Ivoire. That the money was meant for his cocoa and Gold company he wanted to establish in Abidjan — Cote d'Ivoire though, according to my father he deposited the money in trunk box but declared it as vital family belongings. He single handed me the key of the box and the deposit certificate and instructed me to seek a reliable and trustworthy business partner for my lifetime investment abroad.

Now I have succeeded in locating the security company here in Abidjan — Cote d'Ivoire and also confirmed the items with most honest and confidentiality. Now I am soliciting for your assistance to help me lift this money out from Abidjan to your safe account abroad so that we should invest it in any meaningful lucrative business in your country because this is my only hope in life.

Awaiting anxiously to hear from you so that we can discuss the modalities through email immediately for more discussion. Thanks for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,
Prince Dorman

Dear Prince Dorman,

Having always harbored a soft spot for widows, orphans, and others with distressingly large amounts of cash, I would be pleased to help you. If you father (may he rest in perfect peace forever) smuggled the \$18,300,000 in cash into the Ivory Coast in his luggage, he must have had



DYKE BOURDER OIL SERVICES
(PETROLEUM CONSULTANTS)

NO 84, OKOTA ROAD, OKOTA-SOLO, LAGOS, NIGERIA.
FAX: 234-1-523346, TEL: 234-1-523972

OUR REF. _____ YOUR REF. _____ DATE: 12th December, 1994

ATTN: THE PRESIDENT/C.E.O.
Dear Sir,

OFFER FOR SALE OF NIGERIA CRUDE OIL (SPOT LIFT).

QUALITY: Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) standard export.

TYPES: Nigerian Bonny Light, QUA 180E Light, Penning Ton Light, Forcados Blend, Escravos Light, Bonny Medium, Brass Blend.

QUANTITY: Three Million Barrels only. From quarterly allocation of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

SPECIFICATION:	SPECIAL GRAVITY	084.90%
FOR BONNY	API	37.00
LIGHT	RSW	0.6% VOL
	WATER CONTENT	0.2%
	POUR POINT BELOW	4°C
	SULPHUR WT	0.14

PRICE: The price per barrel shall be the arithmetic mean of "three" dated quotation as reported on the plant meter wire as per average lowlight of four (4) quotation (TWC) days before and two days after discharge. The offer is less a gross discount of US\$3.00 (United States Five Dollars) per barrel. This amount minus the current export price of US\$17.50 per barrel.

Letter of intent to be submitted to the Honourable Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), No 7 Kofe Abayomi Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria (i.e. contact through DYKE BOURDER OIL SERVICES).

These conditions are as follows:

1. Spot Lift
2. Quantity: 1 million barrels per month for 12 months
3. OFFER ON F.O.B.
4. OFFER OFF "OPEC" records
5. Freight at buyer's account at US\$1.24 per barrel
6. Port charges, customs fees at buyers account at US\$24,900.00 per vessel of the Million barrel.
7. Buyer shall be the master of records and shall be responsible for the payment of all customs duties or fees, Laytime, demurrage, if any, at port of discharge shall bear all responsibilities in accordance with the terms and conditions of the charter party agreement.
8. Payment of letter of credit shall be made by the buyer after ten (10) days to discharge of the crude oil into shore and upon presentation of the shipping documents to the buyer's bank.
9. VAT (Value Added Tax).

I do hope this will mark the beginning of a good business relationship between your company and mine in the nearest future.

Thanks for your cooperation

L.C. Oloro
Chairman

Oil — one of the few legitimate sources of wealth in Nigeria — has long been a favorite of scammers. In a 1996 raid on this paint factory by officers of the Nigerian Federal Investigative Bureau (FIIB), accompanied by U.S. Secret Service agents as observers, police found not "Dyke Bourder Oil Services" selling discount crude, but faxes, phones and fake Nigerian bank letterhead.

some large bills indeed. If he smuggled it in, I am sure I can smuggle it out, although we may have to reserve a certain sum for gratuities for various border personnel here and there. Regarding the future, I have no interest in the cocoa business, as chocolate makes my face break out. But real estate is always good and I can get some deals on lakeshore property in New Mexico, or bridge in New York City.

Your obedient servant,
Frank

It would appear that these hucksters end up e-mailing — and plagiarizing — each other as well, since they do seem to be reading from similar sheets of music. But

Where To Blow The Whistle

Any person receiving one of the 419-type solicitations by phone, fax, e-mail or snailmail — whether he has sustained any loss or not — should report it to authorities. Individual national police agencies, and co-operating international police agencies that share information, can make good use of your specimen for their data bases. Here are some appropriate points of contact:

- United States, Task Force Main:
419.fcd@ussf.treas.gov
(if you have already lost funds, call 202-406-5850)
- United Kingdom, 419@spring39.demon.co.uk
- South Africa, commdetectiveandci@saps.org.za

If you are considering doing business of any type in Nigeria, and there are decent opportunities with decent businessmen there, there are ways to check out potential business associates in advance. Americans can call the Nigerian Desk Officer at the International Trade Administration, Room 3317, Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230; phone: 202-482-5149. Americans in Nigeria or traveling abroad may contact the Commercial Section at the U.S. Embassy at 9 Mambilla, Maitama District, Abuja, Nigeria; phone: 234-9-523-0916.

According to International Investigation Services, these Nigerian attorneys are considered to be reliable: in Lagos, Ibrahim G. Adamu; phone: 234-1-5833355; fax: 234-1-5850222; and Sam Galya or S.Z. Garba at ExcellLegal Associates; phone: 234-1-2641432; fax: 234-1-2661106. In Abuja, Duchi Al-Hamdu & Co.; phone: 234-9-523005; and ExcellLegal Associates; phone: 234-9-2346784. — F.H.

believe it or not, these and the thousands of similar electronic conmen represented by these samples, have enjoyed considerable success. Of all the Internet scams afoot (and they are legion), the Nigerian Money Offer climbed to No. 7 of the Top 10 for the year 2000. Published reports state that the average amount lost by the suckers who bite is \$3,000, before they come to reality. Others, with less a grasp on reality or subject to a vanity that will not admit defeat, or a strong gambler's instinct, have lost millions. England as well has been a strong target for the Nigerian dirty-money scams, no

More than a dozen marks who went to Nigeria are known to have been murdered, and others kidnapped ...

doubt due to John Bull's old colonial ties with Nigeria. According to the *Manchester Guardian*, such proposals have spawned hundreds of complaints in the UK by mid-year ... including one poor [sic] soul who lost nearly \$3 million.

Another favorite tack of the scammers is to represent themselves as one whose situation might be familiar from the daily news — a minor but known player upon the world stage, such as a nephew of the defunct anti-communist Angolan Dr. Jonas Savimbi, who has absconded with the war chest and needs a partner.

Personally, we would almost hope that police agencies — be there any with *real* purview — don't shut these scam artists down. We find that the promise of such comic opera is a great incentive for getting around to opening our daily e-mail. But we have to say "almost hope" because although Mark Twain might have loved these dramatically successful bunglers, they have not merely cost the unwary billions of dollars — more than a dozen marks who went to Nigeria are known to have been murdered, and others kidnapped, and these ill-gotten gains feed international dope trafficking and other criminal enterprises. Worse, this did not happen in a vacuum: It happened with the tacit approval or active complicity of Nigerian government, banking and consular officials. In this issue we have attempted to warn the readers: Next issue we will show the truly ugly side of Nigerian 419 frauds, and we will follow the money and name names — all the way to the top.

On the long-standing advice of SOF's African Correspondent Al Venter, the globetrotting Frank Hopkins has never been to Nigeria. ✕



Although some of the biggest busts in Nigeria have involved consortiums involving law-enforcement and postal personnel, millions of Nigerian stamps have been counterfeited in order to send out the "bulk mail" solicitations.

The Watchdogs

The first two organizations have taken the lead in exposing the 419 scandal, and have been at least catalytic in spurring governmental agencies to deal with it:

419 Coalition: Started and funded as a public service by Charles A. Pascale, president of Alpha Electronics in Harrisonburg, Virginia, the 419 Coalition maintains an extensive web site with links to various other 419 sites and government agencies. Their site also has an excellent compilation of news articles. Pascale has been a real burr under the Nigerian's saddle, and his efforts have undoubtedly cost them millions is lost scams due to his educational and coordinating activities. Functioning as a clearinghouse and a repository of solid information, Pascale started the site after having been repeatedly solicited by 419 scammers. As he notes, they messed with him, so he messed with them. And good on him! Web site is: <http://www.home.rica.net/alphae/419coal> .

International Investigation Services: Is an association of professional investigators, on whose web site there is a wealth of information on the Nigerian 419 scams, including sample fraud documents and 180 pages listing sample fraud letters than can be pulled down, points of contact for the Nigerian banking industry and government officials, points of contact for reliable investigators world wide, lists of known 419 crooks and their associates — even an invitation to list your own crook. Created and maintained by Njall Hardarson, this is a very worthwhile site with links all over: <http://www.superhighway.is/iis> .

Quatloos!: Is a web site dedicated to financial matters and ways to protect your wallet from fraud of various types. They maintain, among other things, a "Cyber Museum of Frauds and Scams" that has a very good section on Nigerian Scam Letters, with many examples, and editorial comment. An excellent site for anyone who has money and wants to keep it. Check them out at <http://www.quatloos.com> .

Bestfrauds.com: Is a web site delineating "the Best Frauds, Scams and Big Company Cons in America Today." They have an interesting section on Nigerian money swindles. Check them out at <http://www.bestfrauds.com> .

National Fraud Information Center: Maintains a toll-free hotline manned by trained folks who give advice to those who have been, or are about to be, scammed. The hotline is 1-800-876-7060. Their web site is at <http://www.fraud.org> .

U.S. Secret Service Operation 4-1-9: As this type of financial fraud falls within the purview of the Secret Service, they have taken a leadership role in fighting it. Because one of the best ways to fight such fraud is to increase public awareness, the USSS maintains the following web site: <http://www.treas.gov/usss/alert419.htm> .

MAGAV: MUSCLE OF THE ISRAELI POLICE

BY DAVID STONE

PHOTOS BY
ROBERT K. BROWN AND MARTIN BRASS

"Four to the body, then one to the head," repeated the instructor. "Do not chamber a round until the muzzle of your rifle passes the door's frame. Remember, sweep the room, shooting the terrorists in order from left to right and I want to count five hits on each target." With this final admonition, the men of 2nd Squad, Platoon "Bet" of the Border Police Company stationed in the Gaza Strip, began the live-fire portion of their Suburban-Warfare House-Clearing exercise.



SOF Visits
Israeli
Border
Police's
Main
Training
Base

The MaGav

It was 0910 and already approaching 90 degrees on Firing Range No. 27. We were deep in the Judean Desert at Camp Itzak Rabin, the main training base of the Israeli Police's Border Guard (*Mishmar Hagvul* — *MaGav*), approximately halfway between Jerusalem and the lowest point on earth, the Dead Sea. Or as Chief Inspector Dror, Base Operations Officer, described it, "5 kilometers from Ramallah and 10 from Jericho." Both are areas totally under the control of the Palestinian Authority and around which Israelis and Israeli vehicles, despite any "ceasefire," are considered Targets of Opportunity and treated as such.

Colonel Robert K. Brown, *SOF's* Editor/Publisher, had been invited to visit the base named for the late Israeli Prime Minister and observe the training exercises being conducted. I was familiar with the base, popularly known as *Michmash*, having both attended and taught Police/Civil Guard sniper courses there. But since I'd last been there the approved route to the base had changed. Not wanting to take a wrong turn (which would likely be fatal) driving to the base from Jerusalem, I arranged to meet a friend at 0630, Advanced Staff Sergeant-Major Boaz, top NCO of the MaGav's marksman/sniper courses. We would follow him in his Israeli-manufactured and Israeli-armored Sufa jeep on the 25-minute drive down to Michmash.

We arrived at the base at 0720. The last 250 yards to the gate were decorated with decoy radar and dummy surface-to-air missiles. The base is built on the side of a valley. Classrooms, mess hall, administrative offices, quartermasters and the all-important *Shekem* — Israeli equivalent of our PX where one can buy cold drinks, fresh snacks and toiletries at significantly discounted prices, were permanent structures of reinforced concrete. In keeping with Israel's Spartan tradition, all MaGavnics (the familiar name for Border Policemen), whether in basic training or in advance courses, live in the tents that covered almost 40 percent of the base.

As we got out of my car, Boaz's commander, Chief Inspector Shai, Officer in charge of all MaGav marksman/sniper training, greeted us. After inviting Col. Brown to visit his sniper course — "Of course you will stop at our range and shoot with us." — he accompanied us to Base Operations Officer Dror's office, where Turkish coffee and a briefing on the MaGav awaited.

"We are a classic 'gendarmerie,' a fully integrated, operational part of the police for all purposes, but in terms of training and weaponry we are a semi-military force," Dror explained. "I don't think American police have an equivalent, except perhaps when a state might call-up its National Guard. We are sometimes referred to by the color of our uniform as the 'green' police and function as a highly mobile, rapid response and reinforcement force for the 'blue' (regular) police. We are under the direct command of Israel's 'Top Cop,' the Inspector General of the Police (*HaMfakiah HaChalli* — the *Mofcal*)." Often one sees Border Police riding along in blue police vehicles working with their blue-uniformed counterparts. There are some geographic areas, for example East Jerusalem, where the blue police may not go except when accompanied by MaGav.

The Border Guard was established in 1953 with the responsibility of protecting the country's border, deterring terrorist incursions and policing Israel's extensive non-urban/semi-suburban expanses. Following Israel's 1967 victory in the Six-Day War, and even more as a result of the Oslo Accords, the mission(s) of the MaGav have evolved. Today its 8,000 men and women — those doing their National Service and the core of career, professional NCOs and Officers — perform regular police, "public order" and military duties.

The MaGav has primary responsibility for policing rural areas and thwarting agricultural crime. In these efforts it is assisted by units of uniformed, trained volunteers whose operations the MaGav control at the regional level. Handling riots and other mass public disturbances both inside Israel and in Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") is MaGav duty. The MaGav has responsibility for the "new" border between Israel and the areas under the autonomous control of the Palestinian Authority. It conducted joint patrols with the Palestinian Police (which ended last October when they began shooting at us or fragging our rooms in the jointly administered District Cooperation Office), and "assists" the IDF's regular security operations in Gaza, Judea and Samaria.

"Sometimes," I explained, "the issue of who is 'in charge,' the IDF or the MaGav, needs time to sort itself out. Take my neighborhood in northern Jerusalem, for example. We are bordered on three sides by Arab neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods are within Jerusalem's municipal boundary and some within Arab villages that are considered part of the West Bank. When small-arms fire was directed at a building located on a street bordering both types of Arab neighborhoods, where the shots were fired from determined whether the army or police was responsible in the case of further attacks. For weeks afterwards we had foot patrols, some-



Training cadre at Camp Itzak Rabin reflect the high morale and can-do spirit of the Mishmar Hagvul — MaGav.

(left) Terrorist's-eye view of Israeli Police Border Guard, at training base in Gaza strip. (inset) LoChamot MaGav, female fighters of the Israeli Police Border Guard, train alongside male counterparts, use same weapons, and serve in the same capacities in the field.

times simultaneous, of both army and MaGav. Today a semi-permanent 'observation' position manned by MaGavnicks overlooks the area from which the sniper fire originated."

Our briefing was cut short when Chief Inspector Dror noticed the time. "It's already 0815! We need to get to the range. The live-fire exercises will be starting soon." He explained, "the men have been practicing dry-fire since 0615. Regulations prohibit range activities once the temperature reaches 96 and until it drops back down to 90. I expect these exercises will not continue much past 10:30 this morning." One last sip of coffee and we were off on the five-minute drive to Range #27, one of 34 firing ranges on the base.

Range #27 consisted of a series of one-room, windowless, pre-cast concrete "blocks," lined with bullet-absorbing pea gravel covered by a special Israeli ricochet-preventing "rubber." They served as a model of a typical, local village. Two



Like trainers everywhere, you tell 'em you're going to tell 'em; you tell 'em; then you tell 'em you told 'em. Then you show 'em.

10-man squads of MaGavnicks on opposite sides of the "village" were just finishing up their final dry-fire "run-through." Some of the men had cleaning-rod-like aluminum projections with a big red fob sticking out the barrel of their M16A2s and CAR15s.

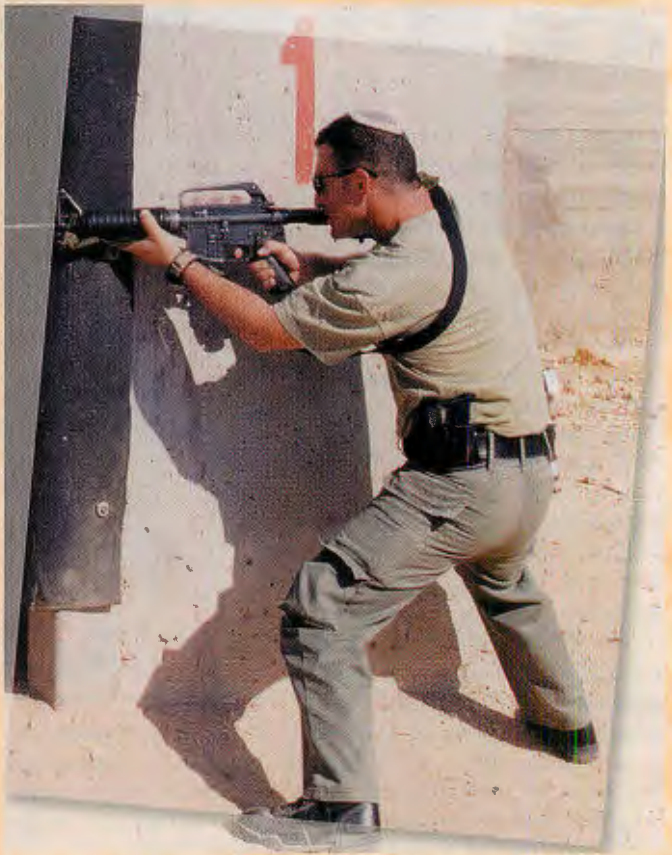
"They prevent accidental discharges. Here, have a closer look." Dror motioned for a MaGavnick to break-open the action of his M16 and show us the rod inside. It was inserted chamber to muzzle and had a 5.56-case-shaped piece of plastic on the end. "Even if you insert a magazine, you can't chamber a round, and the 'button' on the end keeps you from running it through your buddy's back" the MaGavnick explained and then demonstrated. Earplugs were handed to us. We were moved back and the drill began *Al Hom* — "Hot," as the Israelis say.

Two instructors paralleled each MaGavnick as he executed the movement to the door, approaching it from right to left and positioning his feet and himself correctly to be able to sweep the interior of the room from left to right while chambering a round. Then the MaGavnick would have to fire, accurately, "five and five," hitting each of two terrorists inside who were visible from the doorframe, before beginning to enter the room. Next he would move around the doorframe

with a quick shuffling of his feet which allowed him to remain tight to the wall, exposing as little of his body as possible. Last, he had to *not shoot the seated hostage* and put five rounds in a third terrorist. This terrorist was not visible until the MaGavnick was far enough into the room that he could see into its forward right-hand corner. Surprise: The Instructors had changed the positions of terrorists and hostage from that used in the dry-fire sessions earlier.

Now fully inside the room, each trainee would clear his weapon, but the exercise was not over yet. He had to exit the room carefully, always mindful of hidden terrorists waiting outside. If one screwed-up any aspect of the drill, "back to the starting point, do it again. This time right!" was the instructors' refrain. "Watch the door and not your feet" was an oft-repeated instruction which immediately resulted in several MaGavnicks having to "*Od pam — Do it again!*"

The temperature was now approaching 92. Shooting wasn't likely to last more than another 50 minutes. Colonel Brown certainly wanted to avail himself of the invitation to join Advance Staff Sergeant-Major Boaz's sniper course. We quickly drove over to Range #7. Inside an oblong prefab, tin-



roofed structure that enclosed three sides of a 5x25 yard concrete pad, a dozen MaGavnicks were firing American semi-auto M1As and Belgian Mauser K98ks. This was a fixed-distance range with permanent positions for targets at 100, 150, 200 and 300 meters.

This morning, targets were steel plates the size and shape of human heads suspended from steel frames at 100, 200 and 300 meters. This type of target served a multiplicity of purposes. But today the utility of the *bing* they registered when hit was most important. It was too hot and too time consuming for trips (by foot) back and forth checking targets at the 300-meter line.

While Boaz introduced Col. Brown to the training staff and there ensued a discussion of the M14s Uncle Sam had

provided Israel in 1973, I got my ArmaLite AR(10)-T out of the car. Col. Brown had asked me to bring it along in case there might be an opportunity for him to shoot it. What followed was a costly mistake on my part, one that I shall not forget for a long time to come. "Of course Col. Brown can try out your rifle. Grab a spot, get yourself set, Colonel," Boaz directed. I didn't think to make a small wager on the Colonel's shooting prowess. Damn!

"Range 200. Commence fire when ready," Boaz ordered. I told Col. Brown the AR(10)-T was sighted dead-on at 200. "Just hold the cross hairs centered on the target and fire." *Bang - bing; bang - bing* continued (six for six) until the MaGavnic decided 200 meters was too easy. "More to 300 meters Colonel. How many clicks does he need go up on your scope," Boaz asked. "No need to change anything" I replied. "Colonel, just hold the cross hairs on the top of the target with a crack of light showing" I instructed. Once again I missed the opportunity to make a small wager. *Bang - bing* was heard four more times. The Colonel had a total of 10 out of 10 hits. For his display of marksmanship skill, of which the MaGav will be speak for some time to come, Colonel Brown earned two MaGav sniper T-shirts.

Chief Inspector Dror suggested we return to his office for more conversation. Cold fresh fruit and fruit juice were waiting for us when we arrived. We asked about the MaGavnic's basic training. "It is four months broken up into 16 individual weeks," our host explained. "We start by building discipline. That is the single most important quality we need to ingrain in every recruit. The men and women for their period of conscription (three and two years respectively) will be members of the Israeli Police."

Border Police Weaponry

Several weeks of "Basic" are scheduled for weapons training. MaGavnic must develop proficiency with American-made Colt M16s, both A2 and CAR15 models, in 5.56 caliber, the individual weapon issued each MaGavnic. Proficiency with a handgun is similarly required since the Border Police also carry the standard sidearm of the Israeli Police, the Israeli-made Jericho 941F. It is a single-action, semi-automatic pistol in 9mm with a 16-round, double-stacked magazine. Between these two weapons a MaGavnic will fire approximately 1,400 rounds of ammunition during Basic Training.

The MaGavnic's training includes the use of other weapons. They receive instruction on additional firearms: the IMI 9mm UZI submachine gun and 5.56 caliber Galil in several of their configurations and models; IMI's Negev Light Machinegun in caliber 5.56; and the FN MAG 7.62 caliber Machinegun. They are taught to use a M203 grenade launcher, which some will be assigned. They also receive instruction in the use of less-than-lethal munitions including IMI's M16-launched "rubber bullets" and a Federal shoulder-mounted tear gas launcher. Other tools of the MaGav trade, nightsticks and clear polycarbonate shields, are likewise basic training subjects.

Basic Training Program of Instruction (POI)

"Basic" is comprised of 16 individual one-week components. Built-in is time for the trainees to be posted to operational duties, commensurate with the level of their training, when frequent sudden needs for manpower arise: Basic is not confined to the MaGav's two training bases; it also takes place "live," in the street and the field.

After a week of induction, testing and determining initial



Under watchful eyes of cadre, trainee approaches block house, clears room, exits and takes down whatever may be lurking outside.

assignments, the actual POI commences. There follows: preparation for guard duty and defending the base; police duties; professional MOSs; target practice with light weapons; field skills; civics and community policing; firearms instruction and police skills; individual drills; internal security and antiterrorism; working in small teams and unit operations; operating in cooperation with other security service organizations; make-up; and completion/graduation.

Continued on page 77

No staff college courses were required to see that when the fighting began again the defenders of this little outpost of Thailand would be facing serious health hazards. From the M60 machine-gun position and trench-line that covered the northern approaches to the camp, broken ground stretched away to where the border ran. Beyond, about 800 meters out and half-concealed in trees and folds of ground, were forward positions of the world's largest, and best-armed, narco-trafficking organization, the United Wa State Army.

But the real problem was to the flank where the border followed a jungled ridgeline that rose steeply behind us dominating the Thai camp. As the company commander, Pricha, pointed out, if you looked closely you could see among the trees on the ridge a flagpole and a limp flag hanging in the noon heat. That was where the Burmese Army — operating closely with the UWSA — had set up their company HQ and mortars. Exactly 1,800 metres away. What he didn't bother to add was in terrain like this, tactical success is all about holding ridges: If the proverbial was going to hit the fan again, the Thais at Mae Moh village could expect some concentrated attention from mortar and heavy machine-gun positions on the ridge above them. And to judge by their heavily reinforced bunkers and black humor they were well aware of it.

Mae Moh was home to a Ranger company. Nothing like U.S. Special Forces of the same name, Thai Rangers (or *Taharn Prarn* as they're called Thai) are lightly armed irregulars commanded by officers and NCOs seconded from the Royal Thai Army (RTA). Equipped with nothing heavier than 81mm mortars — and not too many of those — they were once mainly deployed against guerrillas of the now-defunct Communist Party of Thailand. Today they operate in a border-security role along with the Border Patrol Police (BPP). Pricha appeared to run a professional enough outfit: Some men were off-duty, gathered in a mess hut for chow or watching TV. But others were stood-to, scanning the Wa positions while a patrol was out hunting Wa infiltrators moving across the border.

This was Thailand's northern border and front line in Asia's drugs war. The



ASIA'S

NEW NARCO WARS

Thai Rangers Hold The Line

TEXT & PHOTOS BY MIKE WINCHESTER



(right) RTA Third Army Commander Lt. Gen. Wattanachai Chaimuengwong (center, dark glasses) inspects border positions opposite Mong Yawn UWSA base.



slow-fuse tensions that had been burning for two years had finally exploded a few days before at a spot seven clicks west of Mae Moh called Bang Nun. Along a rugged 1,300 mile (2,100 kms) border infested by a variety of insurgents, smugglers and bandits, a little friction is par for the course. But the clash at Bang Nun had been a lot more than friction: In the wake of the fighting both sides were still building up forces

along the northern border line: Chinese F-7 jets and armor on the Burmese side; Apache attack choppers, 155mm artillery and more armor on the Thai side. Thailand and Burma — supposed allies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — seemed to be slipping towards the brink of war.

I'd flown from Bangkok to Thailand's northern city of Chiang Mai on a commercial flight and spent a couple of days

Thai Rangers on-the-move up to the Burma border. Despite lack of respect from next-door interlopers, the Thais are able — and willing — to defend their country.

catching up with local contacts, both foreigners and in the RTA's Third Army. Covering northern Thailand and the borders with Burma and Laos, the Third Army is based in Phitsanuloke. But its Pha Muang Task Force, composed of elements of the RTA's First Cavalry Division supported by the 17th Infantry Regiment and responsible for border security along the drug-sensitive borders of Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son provinces is headquartered in Chiang Mai.

On the morning of the third day I linked up with a senior Special Forces officer we'll simply call Anek, responsible for cross-border intel and related activities. From the Task Force HQ in the city we took a pick-up out to the military section of Chiang Mai International Airport where his Cessna T-41 and the two pilots were waiting. A trainer that had seen better days, the T-41 is a single-prop four-seater — pilot, co-pilot and two bucket seats at the back. This little commuter-bird was what Anek used to get



RTA patrol at Mae Sai watching Burmese movements in twin border town of Tachilek below.

around his dauntingly wide AO. We took off shortly after 0830.

As we gained height, the Cessna banked north giving a great view of the massive bulk of Doi Suthep mountain to the west and the sprawling expanse of the Thailand's second city spread out between the mountain and the Ping River. Our own course took us across the river and northeast to Chiang Rai — 45 minutes in the Cessna and a big improvement on five hours by road through the mountains of northern Thailand.

Above the drone of the engine conversation was an effort while visibility had been drastically reduced by the smoke rising from the dry season burn-off from the slash-and-burn agriculture still practiced by many of the northern hill tribes. Anek reached into his briefcase and handed me a four-page Thai-language document to keep me amused. It turned out to be an RTA report on the Bang Nun clash which filled plenty of gaps left by the scrappy, often contradictory, press coverage that had come in the wake of the fighting.

The background of the incident was a dry season campaign by the Rangoon military junta against guerrillas of the Shan State Army (SSA). Unlike the UWSA (and most other Burmese minority insurgents), the SSA had not signed a ceasefire deal with Rangoon and was still fighting a rearguard action in pursuit of the quixotic dream of an independent Shan State. With at most a couple of thousand men based mainly along the northern Thai border the SSA is not going to liberate Shan State any time soon, but for reasons which will



Thai Ranger with tail fin from Burmese 20mm mortar round dropped into Thai territory.



Chinese-produced AP mines used by UWSA and captured by RTA.

become apparent it had become a real thorn in the side of the Burmese military. In January the junta had made a decision to attempt to crush the Shan resistance against the anvil of the Thai border — and perhaps test Bangkok's reaction.

Burmese Assault

The offensive against the SSA got under way late January and by early February the Burmese troops were fighting to overrun an SSA base just inside Burma opposite an otherwise insignificant settlement in Thailand's Chiang Rai province called Bang Nun. On the Thai side of the line, marked by a ridge, was an RTA forward position manned by 19 Rangers. Late on the afternoon of 10 February a company-sized force of 200 Burmese broke away from the main assault, moved up on to

the ridge into Thai territory and calmly walked into the Ranger camp. There an officer announced they were taking over for a while to use the vantage point of the Thai base to gain a better field of fire down onto the SSA camp. Nineteen versus 200 plus makes for bad odds and the Thais did as they were instructed, assembling in a corner of their own base to wait things out. They were allowed to keep their weapons and — whether the Burmese knew or not is unclear — had access to at least one radio and so were able to keep their own HQ informed of what was happening.

Darkness fell and the fighting continued, the Burmese using the Ranger camp as forward assembly point from which to advance down towards the embattled SSA. During the night, however, the Thais were ordered by their own HQ to quit the base by sneaking out in small groups. This they did, despite the fact that, according to the report, they were seen by Burmese troops, but not fired on. By the early hours all 19 had exfiltrated.

The Burmese — who've been fighting jungle wars non-stop since 1948 and are good at it — generally reckon the Thai military is more at home in the massage parlor than on the battlefield.

But underestimating your enemy is never a good idea and in this instance it cost them heavily. The Thais enjoy their fun but that doesn't mean they're prepared to let foreigners take over bits of their country, whether on a temporary basis or otherwise. Around 0500 hours the camp erupted as RTA artillery retaliated with a concentrated barrage from 105mm howitzers and mortars. In the resulting carnage between 50-80 of the Burmese intruders were killed and scores more injured before the survivors straggled back into Burma.

That was not the end of it. Shortly afterward, Burmese units in the town of Tachilek, along the border to the east, opened fire with mortars on the adjacent Thai town of Mae Sai. Separated by a narrow creek of 10-20 meters across and linked by a border bridge, the twin towns constitute effec-

tively one urban area. Two Thai civilians were killed in the barrage and another seven troops and civilians wounded. As Thai citizens scrambled to evacuate the town, Thai troops returned the fire and brought up armor and reinforcements up the main streets to the border bridge. Desultory cross-border fire continued for a couple of hours. "I tell you we wanted to roll on straight over into Tachilek and take the damn town," Anek told me later over a beer. "We were ordered to ceasefire by (RTA) Supreme Command in Bangkok."

An Overdue Explosion

It wasn't in the report I read during the flight to Chiang Rai but Anek's anger and the ferocity of the Thai reaction to the incursion at Bang Nun were not by chance. Thai frustrations had been rising steadily for two years over what the RTA has defined accurately enough as the single greatest threat to Thailand's national security — a wave of narcotics and in particular methamphetamine "speed" tablets openly tolerated by Rangoon's military. Bang Nun had been an explosion waiting to happen.

Over the past four years the impact of methamphetamine abuse on Thai society has been disastrous. Known locally as *ya ba* or "mad

RTA sketch map indicating detail of Bang Nun clash of 10-11 February 2001. Dotted line marks international border; red arrows mark Burmese line of advance by lead element and cross-border incursion; explosion marks site of Shan State Army (SSA) camp under Burmese attack; defended circle south of border (marked with black ink) marks site of RTA Ranger camp occupied by Burmese.



drug," Burma-produced speed found an early user-base in the mid-90s among migrant sugar cane workers and long-distance truck drivers. Since then the highly addictive stimulant has infiltrated factories, schools, offices and homes across the country. In its wake it's left a swathe of organized crime, official corruption, street violence and broken homes. Around five percent of Thailand's population — or three million people — are users.

Logistically easier to produce and move than the Golden Triangle's traditional narcotics — opium and heroin — speed is hugely profitable. A tab that costs three Thai baht (or six U.S. cents) to produce inside Burma, sells across the border for maybe 25 baht. By the time it reaches Bangkok it'll sell for 125-150 baht. And responsible for the overwhelming bulk of the rapidly growing production is the UWSA, a guerrilla army that's emerged as the world's largest and best-armed narcotics trafficking organization.

Once upon a time, the Wa tribes — who inhabit the remote hill tracts along the China-Burma border — were primitive headhunters of interest mainly to colonial anthropologists. They emerged as a key player in Burmese politics as the sword-arm of the former Communist Party of Burma (CPB) which in the late 1960s crossed from China to carve out a "liberated area" in the Wa hills. Several Wa chieftains rallied to the communist cause — an attraction which had a lot more to do with age-old hill tribe hatred of the lowland Burmese authorities than the attractions of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Throughout the 70s and 80s, Wa tribes equipped with Chinese hardware formed the military backbone of the pro-Chinese CPB in a remote but bitter war with Rangoon.

In 1989, however, the politics of insurgency and the narcotics trade in Burma changed dramatically. That spring the CPB was torn apart by a mutiny against its geriatric Maoist leadership by its various ethnic-based military forces. The biggest of these was the Wa who took over the party headquarters at Panghsang on the Chinese border and in May made a ceasefire deal with the Burmese military — one of string of such pacts between the Rangoon junta and ethnic minority insurgents.

These deals suited both sides well. The junta secured peace in the perennially rebellious borderlands permitting it to focus attention on crushing the democracy movement in the politi-



RTA 1st Cavalry Division Humvee patrolling border road in Chiang Mai opposite main UWSA base at Mong Yawn.

cally vital Burmese heartlands. The rebels, meanwhile, were guaranteed autonomy in the areas they controlled — renamed "Special Regions" — and encouraged to involve themselves in business activities. Unsurprisingly, narcotics production and trading proved the most profitable.

In November the Wa set up their own United Wa State Party which united the ex-communist Wa based on Panghsang, in northern Shan State, with a smaller, nationalist faction based near the Thai border to the south. And Wa political ambitions were backed by the 15,000 strong UWSA, a disciplined force equipped with a full range of Chicom hardware from pistols, through Kalashnikov-type T-56 assault rifles up to RPGs, recoilless rifles and 82mm and 120mm mortars. The ceasefire deal and the link up between southern and northern Wa factions resulted first in a massive expansion of heroin production as Chinese drug barons operating with the southern Wa set up new refineries in the Panghsang area. Then, in 1993 and 1994, the UWSA diversified business into production of methamphetamine tablets.

1994 was also when the UWSA began directly to affect Thai security. That year a large northern force moved south to the Thai border — with the obvious agreement of the Burmese military — to serve in a proxy campaign by Rangoon against the half-Shan half-Chinese warlord who'd been dominating the Thai border drug business for years, Khun Sa. In early 1996, Khun Sa abruptly surrendered to the Burmese

authorities and moved to Rangoon (which now serves as a retirement home for some of Asia's best-known drug-dealers). His strongholds on the Thai border were taken over by the UWSA and the Thais found themselves with a new neighbor on the block.

Wa have never been noted as friendly neighbors. First, the UWSA pushed methamphetamine production into high-gear aggravating Thailand's early addiction problem. By early 2000, RTA intel estimated some 50 UWSA-run or -protected speed/heroin refineries were operating along the border. Methamphetamine production, which in 1999 reached around 200 million tablets, by 2000 had tripled to some 600 million tablets. Thailand was being flooded with Wa dope.

Adding insult to injury, the Wa were setting up heavily-armed shop right on the Thais' doorstep. With full support from the Rangoon regime, UWSA began the crash development of key border strongholds while beginning a massive civilian resettlement scheme aimed at moving somewhere between 100,000-200,000 Wa and ethnic Chinese farmers from UWSA heartland in northern Shan State south to the Thai border. In the valley of Mong Yawn, north of Chiang Mai province, a new town was being built with barracks, schools, a hospital, fuel storage dumps, a power plant, power lines and new roads. "The Thais have got a 600-lb. gorilla on the border and its getting bigger and stronger as the months go by," one western intel source told me in early 2000. Ironically, most of the construction was being

undertaken by Thai labor contracted by Thai companies, some with connections within the Thai military!

Ostensibly, the civilian resettlement program was part of a Rangoon Grand Plan aimed at suppressing opium poppy cultivation in the Wa hills by 2005. But the cynical couldn't help suspect a few other motives might be in play. For the Wa the movement south of its military and a civilian support base meant a strategic extension of its influence and military power and the opportunity to turn a foothold on the Thai border into a fortress. Narco-profits both financed the development projects as well as the expansion of the army today estimated at around 20,000-strong. If the Wa ever go back to war with Rangoon — and many believe it can only be a matter of time — they are

going to be in far better shape militarily and geo-strategically.

Burmese motives are more complex. At one level, the junta is using the Wa as a proxy force against Shan separatism: The UWSA build-up on the border is establishing a *cordon sanitaire* cutting off Shan insurgents in central and southern Shan State from traditional sanctuary with their ethnic Thai cousins in Thailand. At the same time, the cross-border drug flow is also acting to undermine and weaken Burma's historical rival, Thailand. Finally, there is very little doubt that both in the field and in Rangoon, the cash-strapped Burmese military is also taking a serious cut from the Wa narco-trade.

The key to the change in the Thai response to these events was General Surayudh Chulanont who was appoint-

ed Army commander in 1998. A professional committed to reforming the RTA and getting the military out of business, Surayudh appointed a fellow cavalry officer, Lieutenant General Wattanachai Chaimuenwong, as his Third Army commander. And that was the end of easy-come-easy-go business-as-usual along the northern border.

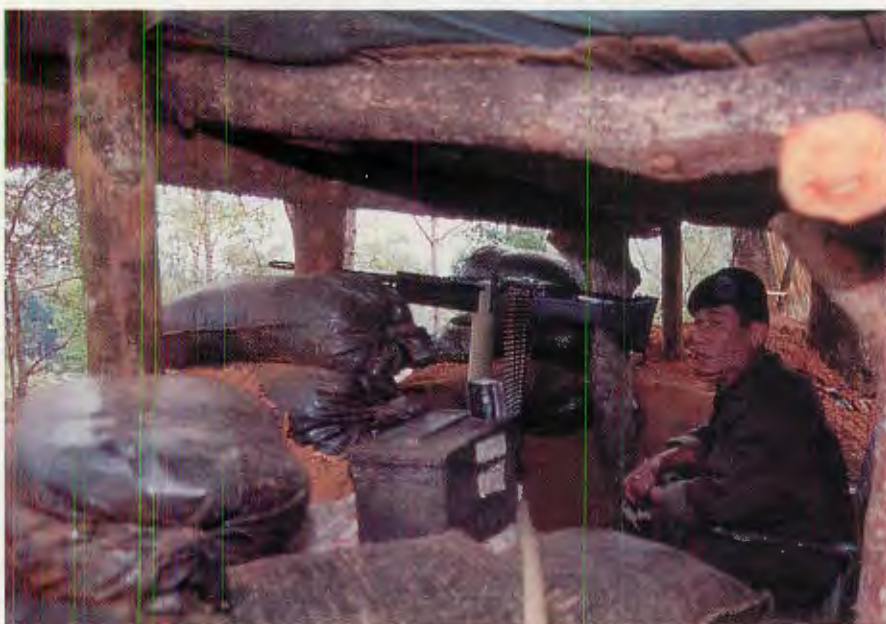
The avalanche of Wa speed flooding across the border was finally identified for what it was — the biggest national security threat since the communist insurgency of the 1970s. The Third Army's Pha Muang Task Force was shifted from the Lao border to positions opposite Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai and given a direct narcotics-interdiction role, coordinating Border Patrol Police (BPP) and civil police operations. Interdictions rose sharply with RTA units occasionally clashing directly with UWSA troops slipping across the rugged border line with speed consignments. Official border-crossing points used by Thai businessmen and companies to do business with the UWSA in Mong Yawn and other new Wa bases were closed.

The new get-tough policy also involved the SSA. Rangoon has repeatedly accused the Thai military of directly supporting the SSA — which Bangkok has repeatedly denied. Nevertheless, it's clear enough that over the last couple of years, the SSA — commanded by a former Khun Sa lieutenant, Yod Seuk — has adopted a loudly anti-narcotics PR line. Its operations have also begun targeting UWSA narcotics-production plants and Burmese Army camps in a manner that, shall we say, parallels RTA interests. SSA units operating north of the Thai border undoubtedly fulfill an important intel-gathering role for the RTA. And occasionally you might be excused for wondering whether all the SSA are Shans born-and-bred or other well-trained elements in SSA uniforms. In Thailand's border zones gray areas abound.

Our Cessna touched down at Chiang Rai before 0930, taxied across the apron past a seemingly giant Thai Airways Airbus-300 from Bangkok to the military corner of the airport where a jeep was waiting. At the main military camp I was given a briefing on the details of the topography of the points on the border where the clashes had occurred. The RTA was interested to get the record straight: There *were* parts of the border that were disputed but, contrary to what



RTA border positions. Thailand's front lines in Asia's drug war promise to heat-up.



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SECURITY GYPSIES



Chasing The Green

BY DAILY MY

The increase during the last decade of companies experiencing downsizing, work place violence, and labor disputes has created unique employment opportunities for those with military and/or law-enforcement skills. A number of organizations have sprung up that provide security forces during these crises situations. They employ special teams that provide

sole security or supplement existing security during critical times. These teams are far more than security guards (rent-a-cops) providing routine protective service.

Team personnel usually are either law enforcement or military experienced. They bring with them discipline and training to meet the intensity of a crisis. Security procedures that were the norm in their previous employment

stand them in good stead. They are able to quickly set-up and maintain command posts, patrols, and establish communications that are required to protect facilities, property, and assets of a company in a strike, riot, or other crowd-threatening situation.

This employment provides flexibility, and the work is only when you are available. Normally you commit to a 45-day minimum tour. These opportunities provide lots of travel to various U.S. cities. And you may be called upon

(above) Somerville, Mass., police officers use batons to hold back striking United Parcel Service workers during an early morning strike disturbance outside the UPS transfer station in Somerville.

to travel to a job site on short notice, sometimes with fewer than 24 hours' notice. However, if your current circumstances do not permit you to travel, you can refuse the assignment.

The security firm employing you covers the cost of your travel and also makes the travel arrangements. While on the job site a per diem for food costs is provided along with lodging. You work 12-hour shifts, 7 days a week when on assignments and all hours more than 40 are paid at an overtime rate. Four 45-day assignments (six months) equal one year in a traditional five-day, 40-hour-a-week job.

Documentary coverage of a strike is one of the primary missions of these security firms. Still and VCR cameras, affidavit preparation, and maintaining a series of logs (such as incident logs, picket count logs, etc.) are used to accomplish this. It is important that the security personnel refrain from documenting legal activities (you can not spy on the union). Your mission on the various sites will be to document illegal activities as fully as possible.

The documentation may be required or useful in these cases in support of, or as proof of, criminal charges; in support of an application for injunctive relief either in the federal or state courts; to support an unfair labor practice complaint hearing before the national or state labor board.

Security forces/teams also develop information on illegal incidents during strikes (e.g., unauthorized trespass,

vandalism, sabotage, assaults, denial of entry/egress, or threats).

On The Job

Some people become legends in their own time working this type of security work. "Pork Chop" is one of them. After serving a four-year hitch in the Navy, he spent a year just bumming around. Then when his savings ran out, he started looking for a job. Seeing an ad in the *Navy Times* for security employment, he was soon on his way. His ticket was waiting for him at the airline counter and by late afternoon he was on the other side of the country waiting at the airport for his new adventure to start. However, either he had not got the correct instructions, or he didn't understand them. (All depends on which side of the story you hear.) Our soon-to-be-legend was sporting a full beard, and looked like something security should be watching out for, instead of a security employee himself. He didn't have a dime to his name; after all he would be getting per diem money from his contact. And he wasn't dressed like what his contact would be looking for.

To top it all off, he wasn't even in the right location to meet his contact. Hours went by as he waited for his contact, and in the meantime his contact came and went several times picking up other personnel at the right location. Soon the hours stretched into a full day as he had also left all his contact phone numbers at home. One day

stretched into two, then finally he called his girlfriend collect for help.

She, in turn, found the telephone number to the security firm that had hired him. Calling them, she raised hell and they in turn finally knew for sure that he was at the pickup airport. However, communications still were not complete, and his contact persons were not able to locate him. Finally, in desperation, the on-site lieutenant stated "just throw a pork chop on the floor in the middle of the terminal, and whoever grabs it is our guy." Well, Pork Chop was found soon after. And after a quick trip to the barbershop, and an issuance of uniforms, he was ready to go.

When I first heard this story, I dismissed it as just another war story that we hear all the time. Then, several months later, I ran into Pork Chop on a site and he relayed the story to me much the same as I had first hear it. Today he is still working for the same security firm and is making a decent living. And, yes, he still is with the same women who saved his ass.

A typical day (in this case nearly a 50-hour one) in this type of security employment might go like this:

0430 - Alarm goes off in my motel room at the Roach Motel. I am in the shower before I even wake up. Cold water does wonders in the morning. Shave, dress, and in the parking lot ready to go in 40 minutes.

0515 - Everyone loads the vans and we are off to the current site. Catch another 30 minutes sleep in one of the rear seats.

0545 - On site and my partner and I complete shift change at our post.

0546 - First cup of coffee (black) from my thermos, many more to follow.

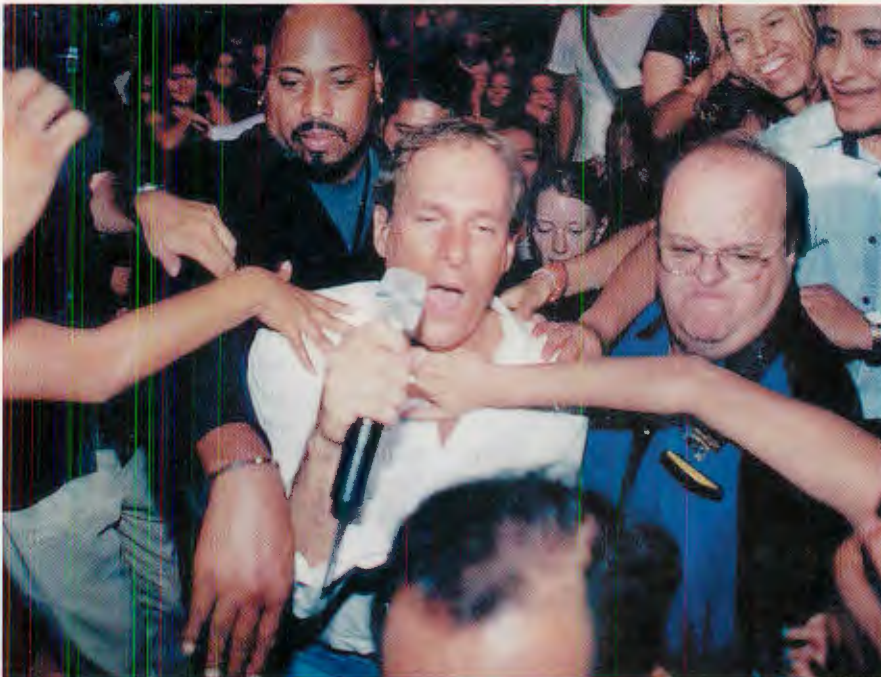
0630 - Sun starting to come up, looks like a hot one today. At least this is a quiet post, way off from everything. Boring, but quiet. No picketers at this post to worry about. They are all at the main gate, more than a mile from here.

0900 - We get the word that the ratification vote for a new contract passed. Looks like we will be out of here soon.

1015 - Over the radio we hear from the other posts that the picketers are leaving. Have switched from coffee to water, and lots of it. Starting to get very hot out here.

1130 - Our rover crew comes around for lunch orders. They tell us that the strikers will be returning to work tomorrow. We will finish the shift and then move to a new site (as yet undetermined).

1423 - A thunderstorm rolls in fast.



Singer Michael Bolton escapes throng of excited fans with the help of bodyguards following appearance at the Festival of Acapulco.

My partner and I are out in the middle of nowhere without overhead cover. Oh well, we've been wet before. I use my poncho to cover the VCR camera and case, as that is more important to keep dry than myself.

1537 – Storm over, sun back out and we are drying off. Camera is okay.

1752 – We are picked up by the van and are on our way back to the motel.

Get our flight itinerary to the next site. It's halfway across the country. We all need to be at the airport within the next three hours. Lots to do, need to pack, check out of the motel, drive to the airport, turn the vehicles in, and check in for our flight.

2335 – Accomplished everything at the last site and caught our flight out. Right now we're at the Pittsburgh Airport waiting for a connecting flight to our next site. Watched the Stanley Cup finals on TV in one of the airport bars. New Jersey Devils won that game. Couldn't sleep on the first leg, but plan on doing so on the next one.

0130 – Just deplaned at the airport at our new site. I guess I got about an hour of sleep this time, but still very tired. Need to collect our baggage and then board a bus that the client has waiting for us. Actual site is about three hours from the airport.

0500 – Arrive at the hotel, did manage another hour of sleep on the bus. Check in and get my room key. I'm already licensed in this state so while everyone else is taking care of that, I can get some sleep. I also find out that

AP Photo/Sieve Morgan



Hundreds of striking Seattle Times and Seattle Post-Intelligencer picketers try to block a Seattle Times delivery truck outside a printing plant.

I'm on the night shift. Thinking how lucky I am, I crawl into bed with a 1700 wake-up call.

0530 – Phone rings, problems with licensing for everyone else. And the client needs someone out to the site — like right now.

0600 – I'm on my post. It's at the main gatehouse of this facility. I'm lucky; they have a coffee pot here. I know that I'll be drinking a lot of in the next few hours until the lieutenant can get someone here to relieve me. This is a plant-closing, so my duties are limited to just observing traffic in and out of the plant.

1352 – Finally! My relief is here, now I can get some much-needed sleep.

1700 – Phone rings with my wake-up call. Back at it again.

0600 – After a long night I'm on my way back to the hotel again. Fall asleep in the van the minute I sit down. Don't even remember getting to the hotel; just setting a wake-up call for 1700.

Everyone who works this type of security has a story similar to this. In my case I ended up with 44 hours paid (12 at site one, 12 for travel, 8 on day shift at site two, and 12 for night shift at site two). And as I already had over 40 hours worked for that pay period, all 44 hours were at time-and-a-half rate. But that is how you make money in this line of work, the per hour rate is not that great, but you more than make up for that in the overtime. Then with all your expenses paid (with a per diem for meals), your entire paycheck can be sent home.

Like all jobs, this line of employment comes with good and bad. First, the bad: Most of the work is outside in all types of weather. You are away from home for

long periods of time. Medical benefits — just about all of the time there are none. This is why you find a lot of retirees doing this work. They already have medical coverage (and of course there is the VA for prior military). Most of the time, the duty is boring. But like the military (or law enforcement) there are moments of intense activity.

The Good: lots of travel, and it is on someone else's dime. You get to meet lots of people (if you are not a people person, stay away from this line of employment). There is a feeling of importance in your job (every site I have been on has been front page news). And lastly, it is a quick and easy way to make a dollar and still have the freedom of months off the job.

Most companies have working sites with ongoing employment. I do not give recommendations for any security companies for the simple reason that what I found suitable may not be for you. All provide good employment for their niche in the field. Without a doubt, if you seek this type of employment, and are in the right frame of mind, you will find an adventure waiting for you. Go for it!

During the period I was involved with security work covered in this article, I worked with and got to know quite well several hundred people. Some of them are also employed as replacement workers during various periods (the unions refer to them as "scabs"). A few also work undercover at different locations. To keep them from getting "burned," all names and locations in this article (except where specifically noted) have been changed. ✕

CONTACT SHEET

Asset Protection Team (APT)
800-706-6405
www.vancesecurity.com

Huffmaster Crisis Response
800-446-1515
www.huffmaster.com

International Management Assistance Corporation
(known as I-Mac)
800-554-4622
www.i-m-a-c.com

Norred
800-962-6363
www.norred.com

Professional Law Enforcement (PLE) Group
800-288-2949
www.plegroup.com

Special Response Corporation
888-398-8903
www.specialresponse.com



KIMBER'S

Custom Defensive Package

The Only .45 You'll Ever Need

BY FRANK W. JAMES

1975 was the year *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine premiered. It was sold subscription only for the first few issues and although *SOF* has established a reputation for finding the facts and the truth that other publications willingly ignore, much has changed in the years since its beginning. Nothing more so than the preferences and choices made by armed professionals in personal defense handguns for the past 26 years.

In 1975, what the knowledgeable firearms *cognoscenti* carried usually came to down to one of two candidates: either a revolver or an autoloader. If it was a revolver, it was mostly likely a 4-inch Smith & Wesson Model 19 or its carbon copy in stainless steel, the Model 66. It was usually loaded with 125-grain jacketed hollowpoints. The muzzle blast with this load in this lightweight and relatively short-barreled revolver was fierce, but the gun was

easy to carry and thereby popular with those wore a handgun during a long duty shift. In fact, the vast majority of all law-enforcement officers in the United States carried .357 Magnum revolvers at this point in time and it didn't matter whether they were federal, state or local officers, just about everyone with a badge carried a .357 wheelgun of one size or another.

However, a few were ahead of this six-round curve because of enlightened

administrators or informed choices on their part. Thanks in large measure to the influence of Jeff Cooper and a new upstart shooting organization he helped create, the International Practical Shooting Confederation (or IPSC), interest developed and promulgated in the ultimate fighting pistol — the improved 1911 pistol in .45 ACP. (The word “improved” is used here to designate the changes both Cooper and IPSC help foster in terms of design changes to the classic 1911 pistol of U.S. military fame.) This group of professionals used the big-bore single-action autoloader for many good reasons beyond the mere fact 1911 shooters dominated revolver equipped shooters in IPSC competition.

The really high speed, low drag professionals at this time demonstrated a specific preference for the alloy framed Colt Lightweight Commander in .45 ACP. Those few civilians accorded concealed-carry licenses and the lawmen allowed to carry the lighter big-bore auto pistol soon discovered the virtues of the Summer Special, a revolutionary holster designed originally by the late

Bruce Nelson, but made by Milt Sparks Holsters, Inc. The Summer Special positioned the holster inside the waistband of the always popular blue denim jeans. This setup was so easy to conceal under nothing more than the hem of a blue denim jacket or even a light shirt that it soon became a status symbol among those who considered themselves at the leading edge of self-defense firearms training and technology.

Therefore, it's natural to say many commentators and experts 25 years ago felt the gun to use for self-defense was a Colt .45 autoloader and the holster to carry it in was a Milt Sparks Summer Special. That was pretty much “it” simply because Colt was the only quality manufacturer of a 1911-style pistol in the United States at the time, while during the same period Smith & Wesson dominated the law-enforcement revolver market almost to the point of arrogance.

Nothing has charted more change, growth and diversity than the taste and preferences demonstrated by law-enforcement agencies and armed professionals over the years since SOF's

inception than the trends in personal sidearms or defensive handgun calibers, with one possible exception. Amazingly, the 1911 style .45 caliber pistol is still popular, and for the well-trained operator, the best choice in self-defense, concealed-carry armament.

The main difference now, however, is the most popular 1911 style pistol is not a product of a decades old traditional handgun manufacturer. Neither is IPSC considered the last word in armed self-defense competition or tactics.

The torch for more reasonable defensive handgun competition has now been passed to an organization just over three years old and the administrators of this new shooting sport are making a serious attempt to avoid the mistakes experienced with IPSC and its American affiliate, USPSA, over the past two decades. This organization is the International Defensive Pistol Association.

IDPA: Real Guns Only

In terms of 1911 defensive pistols, if you attend any IDPA match you are far more likely to encounter a Kimber



(clockwise from top left) The Kimber Custom CDP features a stainless steel slide mounted atop a matte black anodized aluminum alloy lightweight frame. The front end of the slide has been well rounded in order to make the gun more comfortable in concealed carry as a result of the ‘melting’ of all edges on the Custom CDP. The Kimber rear sight has a serrated rear face and on the Custom CDP featured two tritium powered dots on either side of the square cut u-notch. The magazine well opening has been beveled and smoothed before anodizing on the Kimber Custom CDP.





During testing of the Kimber CDP, the author fired the pistol in a local IDPA match. He is seen here firing on-the-move at multiple targets at a distance of 5 yards.

1911 pistol than you will any other make of 1911-style pistol in the Custom Defensive Pistol class — a class devoted exclusively to the 1911 pistol in .45 ACP. Nothing better reflects the success and reliability of Kimber pistols than their popularity in IDPA competition.

In IDPA matches, the class the competitor competes in is determined by his pistol of choice. Each class is separate and IDPA does not reward, or even acknowledge, an overall match winner; only the winner in each class. (Human nature being what it is, competitors still compare match results among themselves, but match organizers are prohibited from rewarding an overall match winner in IDPA competition.)

The four classes are, starting with revolver shooters, Standard Service Revolver; for the double action/single action semi-autos, Standard Service Pistol; and for those single-action semi-autos in calibers other than .45 ACP, Enhanced Service Pistol. The fourth class is exclusively for .45 caliber 1911 pistols, Custom Defensive Pistols.

IDPA stresses the use of equipment that only makes sense for concealed-carry because most all the stages are shot from concealed-carry. Red dot sights and compensators are prohibited and only 10 rounds are allowed in the magazine (a real world reflection of what's currently permitted by federal law). There is a power factor, but it is only a minimum as any 9x19mm

ammunition has more than enough power as does almost any .38 Special round for IDPA. The big benefit with IDPA is the use of real world equipment and ordinary guns, not specialized ultra-expensive "race-type" competition pistols that have no benefit for the armed professional.

Manufacturing Has Changed

No longer do handgun manufacturers require thousands of skilled laborers to work thousands of individual machine tools producing the parts necessary for a well-built, well-designed pistol. One could make a strong argument that biggest change in handgun design has not been in the design of the guns themselves, but in the manufacturing machines used to make the parts as well as the methods used to make critical components.

It used to be firearms manufacturers employed thousands of workers and they judged themselves efficient if they averaged one handgun per worker per day. Today, that rate of production would be considered tantamount to failure. Additionally, no longer does a manufacturer require a facility that resembles a smokestack industry. The advent of the computer controlled machining centers allows a handful of trained technicians to produce a wide variety of essential parts and with such precision that it is now possible to build guns that were all but unattainable with older technologies.

The Custom CDP

All of this factors into why Kimber has become such a dominant manufacturer of 1911 pistols since they started manufacturing 1911-style pistols just over five years ago. Kimber is an industry leader in Metal-Injection-Molding, a

process that maintains precision tolerances and creates parts with greater strength than those formerly machined by hand. Kimber has built America's largest M-I-M furnace in New Jersey and serves many industries outside the firearms

community, but it is the superiority of their 1911 pistols that has made them a market force to be reckoned with. Nothing better exemplifies the standards and quality of Kimber pistols than the latest addition to their CDP (Custom Defensive Package) line of handguns from the Kimber Custom Shop.

THE KIMBER CUSTOM CDP SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Custom CDP.

Mechanism Type: locked-breech, short-recoil-operated, Browning-style dropping barrel, single-action, semi-automatic pistol.

Caliber: .45 ACP.

Overall Length: 8.7 inches.

Barrel Length: 5.0 inches.

Weight, empty: 31 ounces.

Magazine Capacity: 7 rounds (McCormick 8 round Power Mags worked perfectly during testing).

Sights: Contoured rear sight with two tritium-powered dots on either side of a large square-cut U-notch, front sight features a single tritium dot and a serrated back face.

Grips: Hand-checked, double-diamond rosewood.

Finish: 416 stainless steel slide and black anodized 7075 T-7 aluminum alloy frame.

Suggested Retail Price: \$1,142, with one magazine, a polymer bushing wrench, trigger lock and lockable storage case.



The custom CDP is the largest model offered by the Kimber Custom Shop in the CDP line of pistols. (Unlike IDPA classifications, CDP in this instance stands for Custom Defensive Package, not Custom Defensive Pistol.) The Custom is a full-size 5-inch 1911 pistol in a package the same size as the Government Model, but there are many differences between this pistol and the standard Government Model.

To start with the Custom CDP from Kimber features a lightweight alloy frame that has been machined from a 7075 T-7 solid aluminum block. The use of this alloy frame creates a full-size 5-inch pistol the size of the typical Government Model, but one weighing only 31 ounces. That translates into a weight saving of almost a half-pound and helps reduce the fatigue experienced by those professionals who routinely carry a concealed weapon over many hours of each workday.

The slide on the Custom CDP is made from 416 stainless steel and is heat-treated before machining the rails to prevent warping. The slide has a definite "rounded" appearance to it and this is due to the "melting" or edge-removal process. When asked if this was performed on a machining center or done by hand, Kimber representatives replied that all edge removal and especially the contouring of the slide was done by hand. A direct result of this is no two slides are exactly alike. I appreciate the lack of sharp edges, but in some ways I was troubled by the rounding of the slide because it reminded me of some amateur polish jobs I have witnessed on guns being rebuilt by beginning gunsmith students. Be that as it may, it is certainly functional.

The stainless steel slide features both front and rear cocking serrations. The front sight is mounted via a cross-cut dovetail and contains a single tritium powered dot. The Kimber fixed rear sight is drift adjustable for windage and has two tritium powered glow-in-the-dark dots on either side of a square-cut U-notch rear blade. The rear face of the rear sight is serrated to provide a better contrast to the sight picture. The Kimber rear sight is also rounded and slopes downward from the top of the blade to the slide itself. This makes this rear sight one of the slickest (literally) on the market this side of a Novak Lo Mount rear sight for practicing slide wipe drills.

The frame before anodizing is checked on the front strap at 30 lines per inch and it, too, has had all sharp edges

SLAPPING LEATHER

The late Bruce Nelson retired from the California Bureau of Narcotics after a career of undercover work against the drug trade. He understood the absolute need for a well-concealed holster and sidearm better than most any man in his business. His Summer Special holster was an original design and a holster that set the standard for all Inside-Waist-Band (IWB) holsters that followed its innovative introduction.

As good as the Summer Special is, the Summer Special 2 from Milt Sparks Holsters, Inc. is even better. Made with 6-ounce weight leather from the back portion of the cowhide and not the belly or the flank, the Summer Special 2 improves upon the original design in that it features a prominent skirt to act as a divider and protector between the shooter's body and the left side manual safety on a typical 1911-style pistol.



The mouth of the holster is metal reinforced to prevent the holster from collapsing once the pistol has been drawn. Because the mouth does not collapse when the pistol is out of the holster it is possible, even easy, to reholster the pistol with one hand. This is a vital necessity for any armed professional.

Nelson designed the Summer Special to be worn on the strong side and inside your typical blue denim jeans. The Summer Special 2, like the original Summer Special, features a muzzle to the rear cant, sometimes referred to as an FBI cant. This holster when positioned aft of the hip-bone is absolutely one of the more comfortable and concealable holsters for anyone to wear over a long shift of duty. It is also fast for the practiced professional to present a drawstroke as well as secure in terms of weapon retention.

Nelson popularized the trend to having the rough side of the cowhide on the outside portion of the holster. The idea here is the rough texture of the holster better adheres to the inside of your clothing and provides improved position stability in contrast to other designs.

A key factor in making this holster work well is matching the belt to the holster and making sure the belt loops fit the width of the belt chosen to hold it in place. Thin lightweight belts sold by high-dollar retail fashion and clothing stores seldom work, or even last, for very long when used as gunbelts.

The professional and the serious concealed carry operator should always order a belt from the holster maker that approximates what they need in terms of style and appearance, but at the same time get a belt that demonstrates sufficient thickness and strength to successfully carry and position a concealed-carry holster in the same position for many hours.

The Milt Sparks Summer Special 2, together with a corresponding Milt Sparks Holsters gunbelt and matching D-4C double magazine carrier, offer the armed professional one of the more comfortable and easily concealed holsters and rigs available today.

— FJ.

removed. Also prior to anodizing, the frame has been cut high at the back of the triggerguard. This allows the operator to get a reasonably high grip in relation to the boreline and thereby increase his control of the gun. Vital to the reliable operation of the pistol is the fact the frame has been throated or machined to insure positive feeding of all cartridge and bullet types prior to final finishing.

Another virtue with respect to gripping the gun high is the design of the beavertail grip safety. It fits the alloy frame perfectly and more importantly there are no gaps between the grip safety and frame to pinch the operator's hand. The Kimber beavertail grip safety is raised slightly at its bottom to insure a positive engagement and the beavertail is high enough to assist the shooter in maintaining a high grip in relation to the boreline center.

Below the grip safety is the coarse-checked mainspring housing. On the Kimber Custom CDP this item is made from synthetic material and checked in a 20-line-per-inch pattern. Above the grip safety is the Commander-style hammer with a stylized oval hole. The hammer at full-cock is fully enclosed by the tray of the beavertail grip safety.

The grip panels have a double-diamond, hand-checked pattern surrounding each grip screw and are made from premium grade rosewood. While extremely functional, they are esthetically eye pleasing and attractive.

The ambidextrous safeties are positive in their operation and subdued in their profile. They are not the competition oriented "gas-pedal" safeties so often found on racing pistols, but reality oriented designs that function reliably in stress reaction drills.

The Kimber Custom CDP deviates from others in the CDP line by having a non-coned traditional front bushing barrel. This 5-inch barrel features six grooves and a left-hand twist with one-turn-in-16-inches, a standard rate of twist for the .45 ACP cartridge. The barrel also has a match-grade chamber and a good, tight fit to the slide.

The Kimber Custom CDP features a full-length guiderod, making the use of the front cocking serrations on the slide to retract the slide during routine chamber checks. I am a critic of full-length guiderods, especially so on 1911-style pistols. I own a couple of personal 1911s with these devices and they were installed by the respective pistolsmiths because they supposedly help keep the gun tighter and running



Shot from the port in the wall, this target demonstrates the accuracy the author experienced with the Custom CDP in a typical IDPA match.

longer. They also are a help in keeping the slide centered on the frame, but my biggest complaint centers around how is one supposed to retract the slide during one-hand-emergency-malfunction drills when a pistol like this one features a full-length guiderod and an extremely smooth rear sight?

A full-length guiderod forces the operator to pull the slide back by hooking the rear sight on his duty belt or a table edge and pushing forward on the grip. That is an extremely difficult and tricky maneuver with the Kimber rear sight simply because it was designed to be so edge free. The combination of these two features make this pistol one of the more difficult examples to run during one hand emergency malfunction drills.

Does It Shoot?

Having described how well this pistol is put together one is left wondering how well does it shoot? And, more importantly, how well does it run in terms of reliability and stress drills?

The answer was easy to find by simply competing in a local IDPA match. Nothing brings out the shortcomings of any pistol like competition, and this instance was no exception.

The Kimber Custom CDP was used during a local four-stage IDPA match together with a Milt Sparks Summer Special 2 holster. The ammunition used was Winchester's 185-grain beveled base WinClean and the spare magazines were Power Mags from Chip McCormick Corp. The Kimber Custom CDP comes standard with a traditional seven-round magazine and, unlike the McCormick magazines, does not have a

removable floorplate for cleaning the tube, spring or follower. The McCormick Power Mag is an eight-round magazine that has become the standard many professionals have come to rely upon for reliability, strength and top notch performance.

Unlike other gun tests where the gun is put through a series of static drills, the Kimber Custom CDP had 30 rounds put through it to check the zero on the sights and to make sure the ammunition would work in this pistol. It did, and surprisingly, this lighter weight ammo shot to the same point of aim as my standard duty/defensive load from Black Hills Ammunition which is their 230-grain JHP.

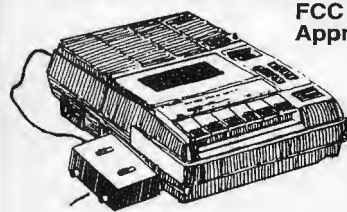
The match went smoothly and the gun functioned flawlessly with one minor exception: The trigger bow on the aluminum trigger was too narrow and both tactical reloads and slide-lock reloads required physical removal of the magazine from the pistol because the empty and partially loaded magazines were held in place by the trigger-bow tension. This added step slowed the reloading process slightly.

The Kimber Custom CDP was easy to shoot well because it offered an excellent trigger. It broke consistently at an even four pounds which is almost perfect for a street defensive 1911 pistol. Most importantly, the Custom CDP offers the operator all the benefits of a traditional 5-inch Government Model in terms of balance and pointability while being significantly lighter than a steel frame gun.

A downside for this particular test pistol was noticed a few days after the match when it was pulled belatedly from the shooting bag. Some rust spots had materialized on the barrel above and below the caliber designation and there were a few, but very tiny specks of oxidation on the left rear of the stainless steel slide at the point where the thumb made contact when perched atop the manual safety. Kimber was notified of these purely cosmetic concerns and their representative responded this was the first complaint of this nature to be brought to their attention. He said the gun would be traced back to who actually built this specimen and see how the slide and barrel were handled during the manufacturing process. It should be mentioned this oxidation occurred in the American Midwest during a very high temperature and high humidity climate and

Continued on page 74

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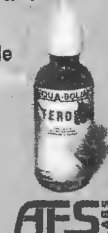
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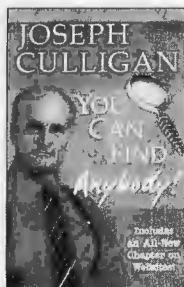
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Sound Off

BY COL. DAVID H. HACKWORTH (RET.)

Psst, Wanna Buy Some Yankee Spy Secrets?

Recently, communist China got the Olympic gold. But a few months back, it hit a mother lode of our country's top military secrets — courtesy of U.S. Navy Lieutenant Shane Osborne and his recon plane flight crew.

This intelligence disaster has been totally covered up — not from the Chicoms, who know exactly what they got, but from the citizens of this land who lay out a trillion bucks every three years to keep themselves safe from the latest Pentagon-announced bogeyman. The reason for this skullduggery is the Pentagon's survival plan: If the public knows the truth about its screw-ups, they might wake up and demand that more of their tax dollars go toward education, health care, taking care of the nation's vets — and putting every lost kid in the USA in boot camp. You know, issues that help the people, not the arms' merchants.

Word is that Osborne and the rest of the flight-deck crew were so busy keeping their damaged plane in the sky, they plumb forgot to update the intelligence whiz kids in the back about the change in landing plans.

The intel bunch, who'd been told the plane was ditching in the drink, went flat-out destroying durable intelligence hardware that could survive the bath; stuff that could easily be recovered by a Red deep-water salvage operation. They did heroic work tossing gathering devices out a hatch while the broken bird was doing roller-coaster loopity-loops.

Except the scenario changed, and the plane landed at a not-so-friendly military spy base.

By the time the aircraft rolled to a stop to be greeted by an armed welcome wagon, the hard stuff was at the bottom of the ocean floor. But that still left a lot of critical intelligence materials the spooks either didn't have time to trash or didn't need to because Davy Jones' saltwater locker would do the rest.

One key item among dozens scooped up by the Reds was a laptop system known as the "lunch box," which contained the decryption software for a host of supposedly ultra-secure data links employed by our worldwide adversaries. And the bad guys weren't the only targets — the plane was equipped to prowl the global skies sucking intelligence from friend and foe alike.

Ironically, U.S. Navy red tape played a major part in providing Beijing with its coup. A Navy SOP that requires each



Col. David Hackworth (Ret.) also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017.

classified item to be inventoried prior to destruction slowed the shredding effort down. You know, "One each ATPC-104 in seven copies." "Check." "Initial here on all copies." "Check." "All right, let's speed it up. It's just about time for Chinese take-out. One each ATPC-105"

One would have thought the Navy would have learned from its last major intell giveaway — when the U.S.S. *Pueblo* was captured off North Korea 32 years ago. The treasure-trove of secret goodies turned over to our Cold War enemies that time around cost countless lives and did similar damage to our security.

Now, besides selling missiles and other military hardware to nations like Iraq, Iran, North Korea and Cuba, China can provide eager shoppers with the latest info on how we've been reading all that rogue mail — and everyone else's — along with the latest made-in-China counter-measure devices and techniques.

Osborne's flight-deck crew did a great job of wrestling that sick plane to the ground, and the folks in the back went about doing their thing with equal courage. Sadly, it's now a national tragedy that the front didn't keep the back in the loop about what was going down.

Congress needs to investigate what happened and also get an answer to the question that many vets are asking: Why didn't the aircraft ditch? If the reason was to minimize casualties, then the Pentagon has it all wrong, because the secrets gained by our enemies have now put tens of thousands of our military personnel at an inestimable risk.

And despite the current fad toward risk aversion, the military is all about risk. Sometimes the few must sacrifice for the many. That's why a 37-year-old can retire with a pension for life. Serving your country is a dangerous duty — or at least it used to be.

<http://www.hackworth.com> is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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Hackworth's new book, a novel,
The Price of Honor, is now available. ✕

THE WINDS OF HAVOC

A Memoir of Adventure and Destruction in Deepest Africa

BY ADELINO SERRAS PIRES AS TOLD TO FIONA CLAIRE CAPSTICK

PHOTOS COURTESY AUTHORS

The Winds of Havoc, from which this is excerpted, has been described as one of the most shaking books to have come out of Africa in years. Covering a time span from 1936 to the year 2000, this true story's pivot is the southeast African country of Mozambique, a country which endured communist-orchestrated civil war and guerrilla atrocities. Havoc engulfed the country, as it has many other parts of Africa which also feature in this book. It is the story of Adelino Serras Pires, a pioneer of the African hunting safari industry, and his often harrowing experiences as he fought against tyranny and the destruction of Africa's wildlife. It is also the appalling story, now revealed for the first time in detail, of Adelino's abduction in Tanzania and his torture at the hands of Tanzanian and Mozambican secret police on totally fabricated charges of plans to overthrow the Mozambican government. His five-month ordeal made international headlines, involved several heads of state and their secret services, bringing shame on many people. St. Martin's Press, of New York, is to be congratulated for exposing this ugly chapter on post-independence Africa and for helping set straight for posterity an infamous record of lies, half-truths and trickery which almost cost Adelino his life, as well as that of his group. This book avenges the memory of a family and of an entire generation of people of all races who suffered at the hands of Marxist revolutionaries.

Fiona Capstick, widow of the best-selling American author on African hunting, Peter Hathaway Capstick, wrote this book, in close collaboration with Adelino. Her military background and her detailed knowledge of many of the people and events described equipped her to tell this story.

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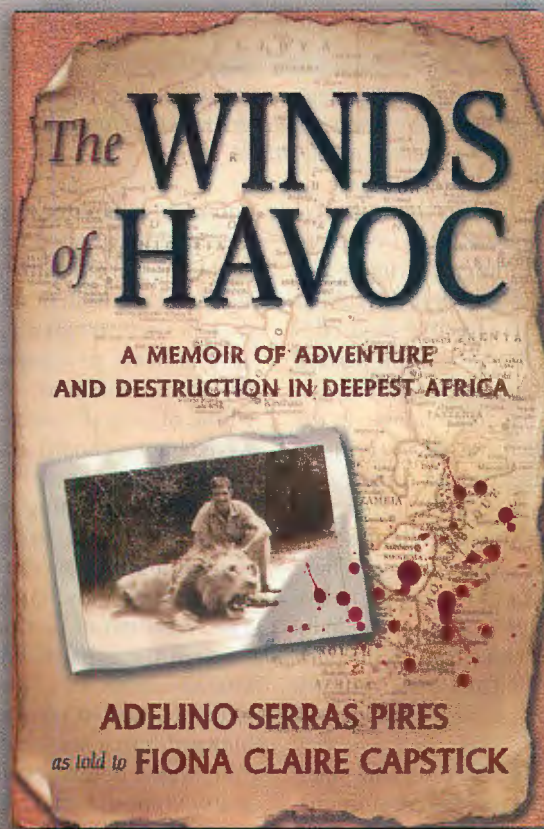
*May my enemies die before their time;
May they go down alive into the world of the dead!
Evil is in their homes and in their hearts.* — Psalm 55

Two black men in civilian dress stood at the door. It was in the late afternoon of August 27, 1984, and I knew they had come for me. I was asked to identify myself and was then told to accompany them immediately. No chance to take a single thing with me. These were secret-police types, an impression strengthened by the one-way dark glasses and their thuggish gait. I was not surprised by this turn of events.

A short-wheelbase Land Rover was parked outside the hotel. I was told to sit at the back, and a dark blue cloth blindfold was suddenly produced. I was blindfolded, but not handcuffed. With a man on either side of me and my son, nephew and Rui already detained, there was no point in trying to escape, anyway. The Land Rover set off. Nobody spoke at all. We drove for about half an hour before pulling up.

My blindfold was removed, and I could see that we had arrived at what looked like a military compound with some houses. I was taken to one and shown a room with bathroom — all fairly comfortable — but the thick bars on the windows and guards outside my door and around the house clearly indicated that I was under arrest, that this was no ordinary house.

I was well-treated, given a meager dinner of sandwiches, and went to sleep. Nobody spoke to me at all. It was a kind of solitary confinement, a softening up for what was to come. The entire next day was the same.



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Reasonable food and silence. Always the silence. And gut-mauling anxiety. Where was my son? Where were the others? What were the Tanzanians doing to them? We were completely legal in all our activities, so what was all this? My instincts kept linking these ominous events with our investigations into Theo Potgieter and his less-than-clear intentions in Tanzania and the fact that I was spearheading these investigations.

My supper was brought in — meat sandwiches and coffee. There were always at least two men who were always in civilian clothing — counterintelligence types. There was one, in particular, with oddly slanted eyes in a cruel face. That night, the same procedure, until I had finished my supper. While I was drinking my coffee, the door opened suddenly and in came the slant-eyed man with his very short companion, who carried a box.

I sat watching as the box was opened and strips of black rubber bicycle inner tubing were taken out. I was pushed to my feet, in perfect silence, as the short man grabbed my arms, forced them behind my back, lacing them together tightly with strips of the rubber tubing. I started screaming with pain, saying that I was not a criminal. Silence as the tubing was tightened even further.

The short man then shoved me onto the bed and grabbed my feet, lashing my ankles together with more strips of the rubber tubing. They left without uttering a word slamming and locking the door behind them, despite the guards posted outside day and night. I was already in great pain as I felt the blood flow to my extremities being restricted more and more. The bed was next to the wall, so I started banging my arms against the wall as best I could to try to boost the circulation past the tubing. I struggled to move my legs for the same reason, but it felt as if the rubber vises were tightening by the minute. I screamed, I shouted, I banged, I yelled. The tubing tightened as the flesh started bulging around the bands. And night had not yet fallen.

I spent approximately 12 hours in that room, alone, in the pitch dark and in agony. There is no point at all in trying to search for words to describe the vomit-inducing torture, the stench of soiled clothing, the waves of sheer terror that engulfed my mind at the thought that I was going to lose my hands and feet to gangrene before the day was out. Where would they be amputated? Would I survive? How would I live afterward? Would I want to go on living afterward? Who would know? How could my family or close friends be alerted as to what had happened to us? How many more minutes of this unspeakable torment would I survive? Why had we been rounded up?

And the laughter of the guards outside my door, the smell of their cheap tobacco as they puffed away in comfort, listening to a voice on the radio, jabbering away in Swahili and

listening to their captive yowling throughout the night like a dog having its claws pulled out, one by one, followed by its teeth, also one by one. Let nobody dare dispute the truth of these ghoulish details. It happened — and the repercussions were eventually going to be felt in high government circles of several countries, involving heads of state.

As my stomach rose into my throat yet again with what remained in what remained of my stomach, a car skidded to a stop outside my window. Doors were opened and slammed shut as a series of feet marched to the front door and down to my bedroom, the door being roughly unlocked and pushed open. The same slant-eyed swine with his overpowering body odor was there with his short sidekick. Again, silence from them. I became quite excited at the thought that I was now going to be dragged outside and shot. Death was a most attractive prospect. I hoped against hope that I would be dying soon. My thoughts, such as they were in between the burning rushes of agony in my wrists and ankles, centered on my three children, especially on my only son. What were they doing to him? Where was he?

I was dragged upright and can remember screaming as weight was put on the balloons where I once had normal feet. I was stricken with terror when I looked down at the bulbous, blackening mounds of flesh. Obviously, I could not see my hands, but they had to look the same. In an instant, I could see nothing as I was blindfolded again and half-shoved half-dragged to what felt like a Land Rover — maybe the same one which had brought me to the compound an interminable two days previously.

I remember making a strange, unbroken moaning sound throughout the ride over rough and then potholed tarred roads. Every jolt, every bump was fresh agony for me. How any human could have willingly sat alongside another human and contemplated — indeed, added to such bestial treatment, such suffering, without a murmur can only indicate psychopathic personalities, bred in a psychopathic environment. We bumped along until I heard the whine of aircraft engines and could smell avgas. Clearly, we were about to board an aircraft. My thoughts then seemed to go comatose.

The rubber tubing was then cut off my ankles. I screamed afresh, my throat already raw from the previous night. The rough fumbling for the rubber, hidden by the folds of blackening flesh around my ballooned ankles was beyond imaging. The sensation of dammed-up blood as it struggled to trickle through the constricted veins was even worse. I prayed to a nonexistent deity to stop breathing right there. Several sets of hands pushed me up the steps of an aircraft. Inside, I was bumped into a seat and my blindfold removed.

It was a deluxe private jet with small tables between the seats. Opposite me was my son, unshaven, gaunt, traumatized. I shall always be haunted by the look in his eyes when



Bernard Clark

Fiona Claire Capstick and Adelino Serras Pires, whose torment and heroic survival are chronicled in Parts I and II of this article.

he saw me. He was handcuffed. Next to him sat Caju, my nephew, also handcuffed and sick-looking. To my left was Rui, handcuffed and in a very distressed state. I started howling in pain as the blood struggled into my feet. My hands, lashed behind my back for about 14 hours, ballooned further. My son and the others created such an uproar over my din that one of the unwashed thugs cut the rubber tubing off my hands and released my son and the others from their handcuffs. Where the hell could we run to anyway? I could not walk at all. I remember swimming in and out of blackness as my son grabbed the grotesque blue-black mounds where I once had hands and began rubbing, shouting at me that he had to do this to save my hands from gangrene. I was alternately yelling and moaning. My son held a cigarette to my lips so that I could take a puff. My hands were unusable.

The aircraft taxied and took off. Rui was able to inform us that he had seen the letters CCM on the tailfin of this F28 executive jet. They stood for Chama Cha Mapinduzi (Revolutionary Party), the Swahili name of the only political party allowed in Tanzania, headed by President Julius Nyerere. This was a presidential aircraft. The CCM is the ruling party there even today, despite the eventual appearance of a multiparty system in 1992.

By the position of the sun, it was mid-morning. We had no energy and were all in a state of profound shock and exhaustion. Our Tanzanian thugs and, as I learned, subsequently, some of their Mozambican buddies in the same business, were on board anyway. They never spoke a word throughout the flight. Where were we headed? I was facing the rear of the jet which, on top of everything, made me even queasier, but I noticed that the sun was on my right. We all thought we were going to Dar-es-Salaam, which lay east of Arusha. But we had been in the air for too long now. Then my son noticed that the sun was still on the left of the aircraft, my right. Clearly, we were heading south and, even more clearly, we were being delivered to Mozambique. This was a grotesque violation of international law. As it turned out, we had been abducted by the Tanzanians at the specific request of the Mozambican government.

After a blurred and interminable period in the air, we started losing height. We were over Maputo, the former Lourenço Marques, and capital of the one-party socialist-Marxist state of Mozambique. After nearly 40 years of living in Mozambique and a forced absence of almost 10 years, here I was, back there, abducted from Tanzania for no reason I could fathom and tormented by the thought that it would be too late by the time anyone in our family or in our circle of influential friends discovered what had happened and had

attempted to have us freed. There is only so much ill treatment the body can tolerate.

We landed at Maputo Airport, on August 29, next to a hangar and away from the usual passenger terminal. Two blacks boarded the aircraft and demanded that we identify ourselves. Then blindfolds again for all of us, and my being shoved/dragged into a vehicle for a fairly lengthy ride through busy streets. As the nightmare progressed, I felt as if I were floating outside of myself, that nothing was real. The new arrivals had wanted to handcuff me, but the cuffs could not fit around where my wrists once were. The vehicle then

stopped in front of what was obviously a fortified entrance of some sort before being allowed in. We soon came to a complete stop and were bundled out of the vehicle and separated, the blindfolds once again being removed. I managed to mutter to my son and the others not to lose hope. This was Machava Prison in Maputo.

The entire afternoon was spent being fingerprinted, a fresh torment for me, and "processed" by a bunch of lethargic, expressionless prison officials. I was given a prison uniform; dark blue trousers with a red stripe down the outer sides and a matching

short-sleeved top. No shower, no soap, no way to wash off the caked filth. I was kept barefoot. This was part of the dehumanizing technique. No force, however, could get inside my head and chain my spirit. I would retain my sanity. I would survive. I would remember all this horror. I would bear witness one day to this terror-filled time.

Guards propelled me down a dank passage which I remember because of the constant sound of clanging metal doors and the pervasive smell of urine. In the passage, next to a grille leading outside, I noticed a White man with a heavy beard and blond hair speaking Portuguese with a thick accent. Our eyes met, but he motioned not to recognize him. The guards shoved me forward and into a tiny cell with a filthy piece of rubber matting in one corner. Nothing else except for a tiny, barred window high up on the dark walls. I was pushed onto the floor.

"Adelino, Adelino! Are you all right?"

It was the white man I had seen in the passage. It was the voice of Dion Hamilton, a British citizen I had last seen in Beira over 10 years previously. He had been arrested and convicted for alleged sabotage of oil tanks in Beira in 1982. He still had another 18 years of imprisonment.

"Read this note and then destroy it immediately. Another thing; expect to be blindfolded for at least 40 days. You are now in the hands of counterintelligence. Be strong!"

And then he was gone.

I struggled over to the door, and found a tiny piece of



(left to right) Adelino Serra Pires; Bito, the driver; "Radio," Adelino's star tracker and right-hand man to the end in Mozambique who enjoyed Adelino's total trust; "Carnaval," the Guinea-Bissau paratrooper and the bravest man Adelino met in the whole Mozambican guerrilla war. He fought for Colonel Jan Breytenbach in South-West Africa/Angola and was known as "Robby" in Breytenbach's books; Charles Duke, "Apollo 16," a local tracker. All pictured with a record-class common waterbuck on the Marromeu Flats flanking the Indian Ocean in Mozambique in 1973.

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paper with a scribbled message on it, imploring me not to ever admit to my interrogators that Dion had been associated with me in sanctions busting for the old Rhodesia. I could not imagine why he would worry about something the whole world had known about for years, when he had been imprisoned for alleged sabotage of a national key point. Clearly he had reason to be freshly alarmed when he saw me.

In the 1960s, Dion once worked for Cory-Mann George, a freight-forwarding company in Beira, where we met. Very soon after Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence in November 1965, Dion, my brother, Jacinto, and an Englishman from Beira, joined me in an aircraft piloted by Dion and we headed for Tete. There we established a facility in the name of the Serras Pires family, to bust sanctions big time for the Rhodesians. This we did, very successfully, until 1974. I took a certain satisfaction in the irony of the British link.

I managed to take the piece of paper in my mouth and nudge it into a crevice of the foul sponge mat. I did not sleep. I could not sleep. I had not slept since the night, 36 hours previously, when I was tied up with the rubber tubing in Arusha. The next morning, when I was brought a cup of water and some bread, I ate from the floor like a dog because I could not use my hands. I noticed that boils had erupted along both my forearms. I had a better look at them when I asked to be taken to the toilet — a filthy hole in the ground, surrounded by excrement and no water. Certainly, no toilet paper. All part of the same pattern to break the human spirit.

A guard took me to a first-aid station, where an orderly poured Mercurochrome onto my hands and along my arms before bandaging them. Back in the cell, Dion Hamilton came by and gave me a puff from a cigarette, again whispering to me that I was to expect to be blindfolded, handcuffed when possible, and kept on a bare concrete floor and deprived of sleep for at least 40 days. SNASP — the acronym for the Mozambican secret police — would be interrogating me, and I could expect no mercy. I did not see Dion Hamilton again after that. He has since died.

Minutes later guards blindfolded me and took me to a vehicle for a short ride out of the prison compound to a building where I was again put in a bare room, made to sit on a chair, and to remain in that position without food or water until the next morning. I could not lie down. I could not stand. I was not allowed to try to sleep. I knew eyes were watching to see when I would crack. I decided in my head to survive, but I did not know how then.

August 31 dawned. Sick with fatigue and unable to sleep because of the pain and because someone was there, ready to slap me awake if I showed signs of losing consciousness, I was moved again very early that day, nudged along outside and into a vehicle, blindfolded. I knew immediately that the others were in the same vehicle. We were driven some distance to what was clearly an airfield because of the noise of aircraft

engines. When the vehicle stopped, my nephew managed to shift his blindfold and peep when it became clear that our guards were distracted by the presence of helicopters. I then rapidly whispered to them what Dion Hamilton had warned me what to expect at the hands of SNASP. I told them to have courage, to be patient, that we had done nothing wrong at all.

Into the chopper and a ten-to-fifteen-minute ride before we landed. I shall always remember the sensation of beach sand against the throbbing soles of my feet as I was hustled out of the helicopter. We were clearly on an island — either Inhaca or Xefina, both of which lay off the Maputo stretch of coast. It turned out to be Xefina, a tiny islet with dungeons which had been used by PIDE and long before that. I immediately knew one thing: The Mozambicans were moving us around because they wished to keep our whereabouts secret. By then, a solid 72 hours after I had been rounded up in

Arusha and even longer since my son and the others had been abducted at the Ugalla concession, the word would have got out via fellow hunters and our American clients, the Rays and Bob Brown, all of Texas.

We were photographed and put into individual, tiny, dark, totally bare cells for the night, lying on a freezing cement floor. The mosquitoes were a particular torment for me as I could not use my hands or arms to swat them off me. A bowl of dry *sadza*, the maize meal staple food of all southern

Africa, was shoved through the door and I continued to eat from the bowl like a dog.

Sleep was out of the question. I was blindfolded, as were all the others, and I spent another interminable night huddled in a corner, being bitten alive.

The disorientating, demoralizing, intimidation process continued the next morning with the first interrogation session. Blindfolded, I was asked to give my full name, date of birth, address in Portugal, details of immediate family members, and so on before being taken back to my cell, expecting to spend another terrible night. I then heard the rotor blades of a chopper growing louder and louder until I heard it land and the engine shut down. My cell door was opened and I was taken to the chopper — blindfolded, of course.

After a somewhat longer flight than previously, the chopper landed on what was clearly the Mozambican mainland again. The routine was now familiar. We were all driven in a vehicle for a short while from the airfield to what I presumed was one of SNASP's safe-house facilities in the vicinity of Maputo with bare cells and cement floors. I spent another night in pain, feeling the cold and having had no sleep for over five days. The bandages on my hands and arms had not been changed since Machava, and I did not know what was happening to them — just that I was in constant pain and that there was a peculiar smell, over and above my pretty terrible body odor.

I believed we were being moved around for two reasons; to break us down and to keep our whereabouts secret.



Colonel Jan Breytenbach, founder of 32 Battalion, and Adelino Serras Pires, meeting in 1999.

Clearly, the Mozambicans were after some information, and they wanted all the time possible to extract it from us before any outside interference could disturb them. Even more clearly, they had been put up to this whole demonic exercise. But by whom and why?

A few blurred days later, the interrogations proper started. Cold, hungry, a little thirsty, caked in filth, unshaven, and in pain, I was shoved out of the cell and into an apparently big room. I could tell by the different voice patterns that there were four people present, waiting to interrogate me. They belonged to blacks, a white, and a mulatto. I was made to stand for hours as the insults and the same questions were hurled at me over and over and over. Everything that first day centered on Giscard d'Estaing, former president of France, now leader of the main French opposition party.

But first an entrée of insults about my fascist colonial family, my upper-class exploitation of "the people," my intention to overthrow the "revolution," my plans to bring back the suppression of Salazar's days, rob the country, bring suffering to "the proletariat," and much more. The voices snarled, yelled, spat, and hissed to my left, to my right, suddenly from behind my head, then two inches from my face so that I could smell one interrogator's decaying teeth. Blindfolded, I could not look anyone in the eye. I had no control over where the noise was coming from. This, of course, was a classic tactic of interrogation to unnerve and disorient the captive.

I was immediately accused of being a member of Renamo, the prohibited Mozambican national resistance movement, which I was not. I was accused of being involved in the building of airstrips in Tanzania on behalf of Renamo in order to create a supply infrastructure to ferry in weapons and attack Mozambique which was run entirely by the Marxist Frelimo party. It is as well to point out here that our concessions were well over 1,000 miles from the Mozambican border. I was accused of using the Hunters Africa job as a cover for these nefarious activities against the people of Mozambique.

My son, nephew, and Rui were all accused of being in on this plot, of posing as hunters. I was the ringleader for Hunters Africa, a front organization, which, I was told, was really a Central Intelligence Agency front. The CIA, I was told, was working hand in hand with Renamo and with South African Intelligence to overthrow "the new order" in Mozambique. The Hunters Africa principal was an American millionaire, wasn't he? And I was the mastermind, the interrogators stated. I was a son-of-a-bitch fascist enemy of the people, and much, much more. Oddly enough, I noticed, that the effect of the words was wearing off because of the sheer repetition.

I was grilled all day about Giscard d'Estaing and his role in my presence in Tanzania. The four voices knew we went back a long way, saying that he had hunted with me in "fascist" Mozambique days. They wanted to know whom he spoke to in Tanzania during our recent hunt. What did we

say about together? What were we planning together? Constant insults and threats were blasted at me about my being closely involved with the South African intelligence apparatus, about my being an operative for the Central Intelligence Agency, known enemies of the Mozambican state, about my close friendships in the "G7 clique" of countries. Reference was made here to my former clients from the great winemaking families of Europe. I was accused, in particular, of being in cahoots with d'Estaing in plans to overthrow the Mozambican government. Each time I opened my mouth to deny this hallucinatory rubbish of the first magnitude, I was shouted down and threatened afresh by the four voices. I was a capitalist, an enemy of the revolution.

Specific questions were shouted at me concerning my frequent trips to the United States of America. What was I really up to over there? Whom was I really seeing, and why?

Gross and often obscene insults peppered the questions. The most zealous and demeaning of the four voices belonged to the white man.

The voices tried to grill me about Gordon Cundill and the "South African connection." I was battered verbally with questions and accusations, which became more outrageous as the day wore on and I was kept standing on exceptionally painful feet. My group and I were the "Lisbon terrorism connection," ready to unseat the Mozambican government. At the end of that terrible

day, I was assured that I would talk in the end, that I would "sing" as loudly as I could. "They all do!" hissed one of the voices, as I was pushed out of the room and back to my cell, my bladder about to burst.

On the second day, after terrible food, no washing facilities, forcing me to use my cell as a latrine which was never cleaned, and a night in which I was again deprived of any sleep by a guard with a loud radio blaring away outside my door, and by other guards who kept opening and slamming my cell door, I was hauled back into the interrogation room to face the four voices again — blindfolded, of course.

The same constant yelled grilling about Giscard d'Estaing and our role in plotting against Mozambique from Tanzania. My constant denials. Then one of the voices shouted suddenly, "Right! You don't want to talk about your French friend and his Yankee fascist friends and what you are all up to? Now we are going to make you talk."

With that, I heard the voice of my nephew, Caju, outside. He was being thrashed mercilessly with some instrument and was bellowing in pain as each blow fell. In between the blows, I was asked if I still wanted to keep silent about my friends and our subversive activities against the state of Mozambique and her people. I kept asking them not to beat the others because they were innocent of all the accusations, and that they could beat me for what it was worth — but that it would change nothing.

This went on for several days, although the beatings of Caju stopped. I immediately noticed that there were new



Lieutenant-Colonel Ron Reid-Daly, legendary founder of the Selous Scouts Regiment, and Adelino Serras Pires, in 1999.

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voices in the room, one belonging to a Spanish speaker, a Cuban, from what I could detect. The same accusations, the same threats — and a new one, reminding me that my son was also a captive. I could not admit to what was vicious nonsense. Of course I became anti-Frelimo. Of course I was filled with hatred for what had befallen my parents, my family, our friends, an entire generation — not to mention the country and the wildlife — but my group and I were blameless of everything being hurled at me.

This would not prevent whatever it was these four voices and their pals wanted to do to me, to my son or to anyone else for that matter. I was in a semicomatose state and was trying to mentally switch off the pain, the mental anguish, the filth, the indescribable fatigue, the hunger, the cold at night and the fear that my son and the others would be killed to make me “talk.” I kept telling myself that something was preventing our captors from killing us and that gave me sufficient mental fuel to hand on for another day. And another. And one more after that. My instincts told me to hang on to my sanity, to hang on to hope, to detach. Like a recovering alcoholic, I forced myself to cope with one day at a time. This, too, would end.

They moved me again, at dawn one morning. I was taken some distance over bad roads to what turned out to be another SNASP facility of sorts. I was put into a small room with a tiny barred window — converted servant's quarters, by the looks of things.

I managed to see this by pushing up an edge of the blindfold with my thumbs when my guard took me out into the bushes to relieve myself. I could not use my fingers at all. There were no toilet facilities, certainly no shower facilities. The guard saw me do this and threatened to gouge out my eyes if I ever tried to do that again. Somehow, deep in my gut, I just knew this was bluster. They — whoever they were — did not want me dead. A mere guard would beat and kick and insult, but he would not take more drastic action without a go-ahead from his bosses.

I lived on *sadza*, the maize meal diet of the locals. Sometimes I would have a piece of bread and tea with sugar in the mornings, but not always. I never once ate any greens or protein of any sort in the first 53 days of my captivity. One or two of the guards would feed me with a spoon because I could not use my hands at all for over six weeks after the rubber-tubing ordeal. Even a tiny act of helpfulness like that gave me moral strength. Most of the time, I fed myself like a dog, lapping at the bowl on the floor. I was going to stay alive. I was going to bear witness about this, especially to those who did not want to hear, and who still don't. To do this, I had to eat, whatever the circumstances. My spirit would not be broken.

Another interesting turn gave me hope. After I had been in this fresh location of solitary confinement for a few days, a male nurse, who never once spoke at all, would visit me at that place at fairly regular intervals. He changed my bandages

and washed my arms and hands. The pain was still bad in my extremities, and I suffered an itching infection of my eyes because of the blindfold, which was never removed. I learned that the human body can get used to anything if it goes on long enough. My eyes itched and burned, but I could not scratch them. Then the male nurse medicated my eyes and I recovered. The swelling in my hands and feet was still very bad, but it was starting to subside. I no longer feared I would lose them and die of gangrene. The Mozambicans and their Tanzanian friends did not want me dead.

I was left in that state of solitary confinement for more than 40 days. This was also supposed to break me because of my anguish over the fate of the others — of my only son, in particular. This abandonment was supposed to force me to eventually go off my head and start babbling anything my tormentors wanted to hear, followed by a “signed confession” — in true commie fashion, of course. Then I remembered Dion

Hamilton's warning about being blindfolded and maltreated for at least 40 days. After about 30 days, something happened to help me survive. One of my guards whispered to me that he had spoken to another guard who told him that Senhor Monteiro, Senhor Caju and Senhor Tim-Tim were alive. They were “fine.” That simple act of kindness gave me mental strength to continue.

In all that time, I was never allowed to sit out in the sunshine, to hobble about and get some exercise in the fresh air.

I lived in my cell, a tiny, dark room, 24 hours a day, except for when I was taken out into the bushes to relieve myself. From dawn until dawn, the radio outside the door was never turned off. The people's socialist revolutionary programs blared away without a break to alleviate the boredom of the guards and to prevent my falling asleep. The cell door would open and shut, open and shut, open and shut for the same purpose.

I do not remember waking up from sleep, but I must have lost consciousness from time to time. I must have had coma-like catnaps for a few minutes at a time. I was always awake every time the door opened. What I do know is that I was kept on a bare cement floor with no blankets or mattress.

Not being able to open my eyes at will, to blink normally, to see — even if it was a somber wall and bars on the window — dispossessed me of a basic body function; control over my life. But this was the whole point of the exercise; to wear me down until I howled what they wanted to hear.

One morning, about 45 days into our ordeal, I had visitors — the “voices,” with one or two new ones. The interrogations resumed. Had I had time to rethink my situation? Was I now prepared to admit my guilt and direct involvement with the CIA, with Renamo, with the South African intelligence community, with my rich and famous friends from Europe and their complicity in this plot to destroy the people's revolution of Mozambique? I reiterated what I had stated from the first day; that we were innocent of all these accusations.



Adelino Serras Pires meeting with Afonso Dhlakama, leader of Renamo, in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1989.

Continued on page 76



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Kimber .45

Continued from page 58

after the gun was coated with salty human sweat because of my usual case of match nerves.

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I Was There

Continued from page 31

told American soldiers about the shelling that killed so many young people it was obvious the memory was painful for her, and the photographs and names of children she knew were all around her. She felt it was her duty not only to tell their story, but to remember them, however painful it was. She held the children in her heart, and called their names, and tried to remember their faces. I knew then she was a noble person.

I was reminded of the Jewish legend of the Just Men. Every generation God selects a few men to bear the grief and pain for all the crimes committed in the world. I believe that Jasmina Spahic is a Just Woman for the slaughtered children of Bosnia.

She is a funny, thoughtful, and kind woman who gave many tired American soldiers a long way from home the best day they would know in Bosnia.

I was impressed with her intelligence and character and I told her early on that I wanted to return to Bosnia and escort her to the United States so she could realize her dream of going to college in America. She thought about it for a couple weeks and talked it over with her parents. While we talked one night on the phone she told me she would wait for me. She found a sponsor family before I did, a kindly couple in Texas.

And so a year to the day that we had last seen each other she was running toward me at the Sarajevo airport. A few days later we left for America. At the bus station in Tuzla everyone was crying, even Jasmina's tough, infantry, combat-veteran father. The journey to the U.S. was difficult as Jasmina wasn't able to get her student visa from the American Embassy until the last minute, and there was no time to get visas for any European countries. We made it, but barely. Continental Airlines held the plane 10 minutes for us in Frankfurt. Later, as we took off from Newark and the plane turned toward Texas, Jasmina said she didn't feel anything yet — she must be too tired. I told her to look out the window at the Statue of Liberty. Then it hit her. Against all odds, she was in America ... America ... and she cried and cried.

Jasmina Spahic is attending summer school in Texas, and is 25 now. Her dreams to get an education and help her family will come true.

— Daryl Tucker ✕

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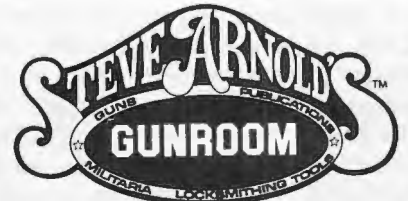
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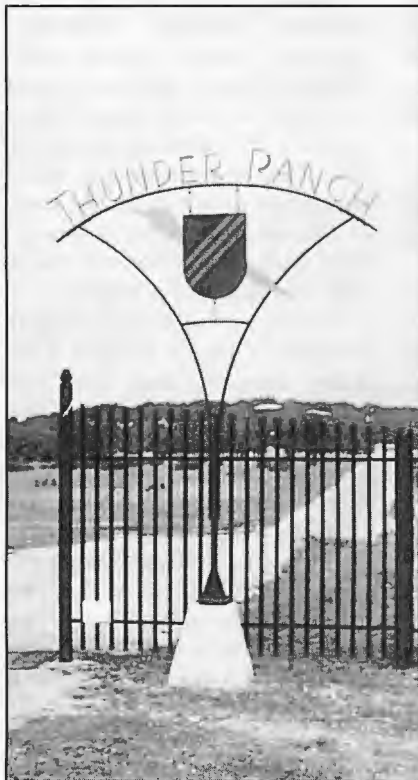
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Continued from page 50

the Burmese were putting out, Bang Nun was not one of them. The Ranger camp "borrowed" by the Burmese was a forward position but it was also unquestionably on Thai soil. From Chiang Rai, Anek was headed back to Chiang Mai and then directly on to Mae Sot on the western border where the Karen National Liberation Army was still fighting its decades-old war against Rangoon. I drove on north up the main highway to what was once the main crossing point into Burma at Mae Sai.

Since the clashes, the town was still an armed camp. Regular troops from units across the north patrolled the streets on foot and watched Burmese movements in the twin town of Tachilek from high ground. On the main street, armored cars were deployed, 105mm cannons pointed across the border bridge towards Burma. And the bridge, normally crossed by hundreds of traders and tourists each day, remained firmly closed. In Mae Sai a semblance of normality continued. But cross-border trading which is the life-blood of both towns was at a standstill.

Meth Central

From Mae Sai in a hired 4X4 I cut into the hills that run along the border to the west. At the main RTA bases and smaller border positions like Mae Moh word from Anek had prepared a good reception from local commanders. From Chiang Rai the border road crossed into Chiang Mai province. There, one of the Ranger camps provided a sweeping view north across the Mong Yawn Valley, the heart of the UWSA presence and Methamphetamine Central.

Even without binoculars, the Wa development was plainly visible — the HQ complex of Wei Xuegang, an ethnic Chinese drug-baron who was one of the two main UWSA commanders on the Thai border. I couldn't help but reflect that if this had been the Israeli-South Lebanon border, the in-your-face provocation of Mong Yawn would already have attracted a few cross-border airstrikes, if not ground raids. But in Southeast Asia they play by different rules.

Two days later back in Chiang Mai Anek set up a lunch with his boss, Third Army commander Lt. Gen. Wattanachai. It was an informal off-the-

record chat on the veranda outside his offices in the city's main army base. Over gin and tonics — frequently refilled by orderlies — Wattanachai, smiling and deceptively soft-spoken, pulled no punches. At Bang Nun the Burmese had got what had been coming to them for a long time. In fact, he said, the Burmese commanders responsible should by rights be put up against a firing squad.

But two others factors were worrying the RTA, said Wattanachai. One was the ongoing Wa buildup along the border. Numbers, both military and civilian, were increasing. An estimate of around 3,500 UWSA troops along the northern border at the beginning of 2000 had now, a little over a year later risen to to around 8,000. Civilian settlements were also increasing as local Shans were forced or encouraged to move out to make way for the Wa and Chinese from the north. And with RTA interdiction along the northern border tightening by the month, the Wa — with Rangoon's blessing — were also shifting operations along Thailand's western border, linking up with another pro-Rangoon force, the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (a breakaway from the anti-Rangoon KNLA). Speed seizures in Thailand's western provinces were increasing rapidly.

The other concern was the interest of the People's Republic of China in all this. Chinese military sales and trade have kept the Rangoon dictatorship propped up for over a decade as Chinese strategic influence has increased across Burma. But now Chinese doctors, teachers and technicians were based in Mong Yawn assisting the UWSA development of the area. The RTA assessment was that these specialists were not simply a spillover of China's free-market economy: They were with the UWSA with the knowledge and approval of Beijing.

Beijing was also supporting the Wa militarily. Chinese People's Liberation Army advisers had been training UWSA forces in the north of the Shan State and the UWSA was buying Chinese hardware. Some of it, notably recently delivered HN-5N man-portable surface-to-air missile systems was sophisticated stuff and along the Thai border — where RTA choppers had already taken groundfire — posed a real threat. Before too long expect the frontline in Asia's drugs war to be getting hotter still.

Mike Winchester is an SOF Senior Foreign Correspondent. ☞

Continued from page 72

Right, say the voices. Listen carefully to this tape recording. It is of your son, who has already confessed. The tape played and I heard my son being beaten senseless with either a hippo-hide whip, known as a *sjambok*, or a rubber hose. Of course, I knew my son had nothing to confess because we had done nothing wrong. As I learned later, he was made to stand for days, surrounded by guards who would belt him if he faltered and tried to sit or lie down. He was stretched out on the floor and beaten. The same was done to my nephew, Caju, and to Rui, who was the victim of appalling mental torture. We were all told at various stages that one or other of the group had already died. When I was told that my son was dead, I decided, more resolutely than ever, that I would never admit to all these crazed accusations. Neither would I willingly die.

After a terror-filled day, I was back in my cell, blindfolded, exhausted, cold, in still considerable discomfort, and sitting in a corner when the door opened and one of the guards came in. He apologized that he had no tea or coffee, but had brought me a mug of hot sugared water to warm me up. It was the same guard who had given me news about the others. That humane gesture by someone who had taken a great risk by coming in to me and speaking, let alone giving me anything, even a mug of hot water, affected me and, for the first time in many years, perhaps since the death of my baby daughter, Margarida, in the 1950s, I sobbed. All the pain, horror and anxiety burst inside me. The guard was alone. Nobody else knew about this. I recovered, felt a strange relief and a fresh determination to stay alive and remember. I have never forgotten that guard. He would also share the remains of his food when he dared to — a little rice, extra tea. Even the blackest hole has a chink of light.

There was a sudden flurry of activity one morning. Guards were sweeping, sluicing, cleaning up. A table and some chairs were crammed into my cell and I could hear what sounded like recording equipment being installed. I had a premonition right there — all this preparation could only mean one thing, a high-ranking visitor. Who would that be?

This moving account will conclude with next month's Part II. ☞

MaGav: Israeli Police

Continued from page 43

The Basic Training POI is identical for both males and the females (called *Lochamot MaGav* — female fighters of the Border Police) except that slightly less physical demands are placed upon the women. Women function in a full-police combat role wherever their presence is required, including in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. Several years ago I was present when one of the first classes of *Lochamot MaGav* had their course graduation final exam on the M16. Our Civil Guard Sniper Course was at Michmash using Range 7. The *Lochamot* were being tested on Range 6.

They had already been up for the predawn forced march, an Israeli tradition and part of the completion of everyone's basic training. It was August. The sun was blazing and at 0830 it was already 86 degrees. Still in full combat gear (combat vest with eight, loaded 30-round M16 magazines, two filled one-quart canteens, additional pouches filled with assorted individual and unit equipment, helmet, nightstick and M16A2) the *Lochamot* were completing a 250-meter run and timed course of fire. They had to fire and hit human-head-sized-and-shaped targets — 10 for 10 at 50 and 100 meters; 8 for 10 at 150 and 200 meters; a total of 40 rounds in 2 1/2 minutes, including magazine change.

The *Lochamot* passed or they did it over until they passed. All passed, three literally passing out and being given I.V. infusions, Israeli-style, straight out of the icebox, by a doctor completing our sniper course who came to their aid. But not one collapsed before completing the course of fire, clearing their M16s and exiting the range enclosure. They are tough!

Tamar, the niece of a friend of mine, was in one of the first graduating classes of *Lochamot*. She was the *Magist* — MAG operator (FN 7.62 caliber machinegun) for her platoon. After graduation her unit was stationed "up north" in the Galilee. "Most of the time we chased criminals. Stealing farm equipment and cattle-rustling was big business. We tried to intercept the thieves making their way back to the area under control of the PA

[Palestinian Authority]." Tamar also shared with me her experiences with fire-fights. "There were some blood feuds in the Arab villages in our area. Sometimes the fighting got real hot! Lots of shooting — shotguns, handguns and assault rifles. Sometimes someone might throw a hand grenade. Restoring order was intense work. On many occasions we were 'in it' just like the guys."

Special Ops Units

To effectively carry out its varying missions the MaGav has created several Special Units. Best known is its crack counter-terrorist unit — the *Yamam*. Hostage rescue, anti-terrorist and SWAT-unit-like capabilities are the trademarks of the *Yamam*, widely considered to be one of the best worldwide. Another special operations unit is the *Kalbancem* — the (K-9) explosive-sniffing dogs and their MaGav handlers. They patrol all public places and are on hand at all major events. The dogs, U.S. Customs-trained labs, immigrants from the U.S.A., are used extensively to check for additional bombs at all terrorist bombings and to check out locations and objects with which the bomb squad men don't want to or can't check themselves.

There is also an undercover unit — the *Mistaraveem*. The men of this unit are heavily schooled in the use of stealth, disguise and surprise. They operate in the heart of those areas totally controlled by the Palestinian Authority, where once the terrorist organizations' command and control use to function openly. No more. Since the election of Aric Sharon as Israeli Prime Minister, the members of the *Mistaraveem* have "disrupted" such functioning with dispatch!

"Try a MaGav lunch, it is a hot meal, our main one of the day," Chief Inspector Dror's invited. His hospitality had to be declined. We had an afternoon meeting scheduled at IMI for Colonel Brown to try out the Negav Light Machinegun and we could not be late. Our visit concluded about noon. We drove back to Jerusalem unescorted. Fortunately, I did not make any wrong turns.

David Stone is a former Connecticut Yankee, living in Jerusalem. He is an Israeli Police Civil Guard Sniper Instructor. ✕

"Most of the time we chased criminals. Stealing farm equipment and cattle-rustling was big business."

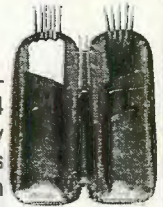


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fighting

Holsters

BY DAVID STONE

Fobus Holsters & Pouches

Like many of us I am resistant to change, someone who prefers natural to man-made. About the time something becomes old-fashioned I begin to warm up to it. Sound familiar? Well, I've learned mine is not always the best policy. Fobus, an Israeli manufacturer of state-of-the-art injection molded holsters, has shown me the error of my ways.

I had known of Fobus for several years. Every member of our Jerusalem IPSC club used a Fobus holster. I was satisfied with my seven-year-old Kramer leather and wasn't about to try "this high-tech stuff." An unexpected trip to the States provided the opportunity to meet a new friend, Harry Gold, a police firearms instructor. Harry drove six hours to catch me at JFK before my flight back to Israel. He made me a present of two Fobus holsters and mag pouches. I was too embarrassed to say, "No thanks, I don't use the high-tech stuff." I promised to try the holsters. "Whichever handgun my wife brings to the airport when she comes to collect me, that is the holster I'll wear on the ride back to Jerusalem." It was a promise I kept. And I got a hell of a surprise.

I liked this Fobus paddle holster. It was comfortable. It was fast and easy to put on and take off. No need to fool with my belt. No inability to position the holster exactly where I wanted it because of belt loops. Two days later I took the holsters and mag pouches with me to IPSC practice. "Careful, Fobus is lots faster than leather," I was warned. Several dry-fire practice draws proved the truth of what I'd just been advised. Wow! It really was much faster than leather. I also got a better overall grip. My shooting with both a Sig 226 and Springfield Armory 1911-A1 was better than it had ever been. Magazine changes were smooth, no sticking. That night I became a "high-tech" convert.

Recently, I visited with Hanan Har-Shen, Fobus owner and creative force. Rolling his own cigarette, Hanan explained, "I was studying industrial design and working part-time making leather bags and wallets. A friend asked me to make him a leather holster for his handgun. I did. That was 1978 and Fobus was born, quite by accident." In the 25 years since, Hanan developed his Economic Theory of Holster Manufacturing. "Minimizing labor costs was the secret of being able to offer the world's best holsters at a low retail price and make a profit. Leather was too labor intensive. There had to be a better way." Hanan found it.

"From leather I tried a three-layer laminate. Didn't work.



Other than a molding to provide exact, accurate fit for individual handgun makes and models, all Fobus holsters have the same design and features. They are high-ride, open-top and paddle style. The paddle is 3 inches wide at the top. Two prongs located just below your belt firmly secure the paddle that widens to 4.5 inches. It is contoured its entire length for a comfortable fit.

Then I tried part leather and part injection molding. Again I was not satisfied. The materials used proved unsatisfactory and assembly remained too labor intensive. Finally, several years ago I started using a polymer, 'RX-18' and full injection molding. It has turned out to be the perfect formula."

Three years in development RX-18 provided Hanan with a

super strong, lightweight (2oz. per holster) material. "Unlike Kydex, it does not lose its shape in temperature extremes. Its lighter weight with equal strength means we use less material, which reduces cost. It allows us to get a very accurate 'fit' in our molds." The savings in labor costs are simply staggering. Today Fobus' entire operation requires only a few part-time assembly workers. "We can assemble a holster in 30 seconds. In leather I would have to have between three and seven full-time employees and need to work two months to do what I can do in a day with RX-18!"

Each Fobus holster model has its own individual, custom injection mold. "Our first Israeli order came from the GSS's (General Security Service, a.k.a. *Sabak* or *Shin Bet*) Personal Protection Unit for the Glock 19C together with a double-mag pouch." Most of our new products begin as "requests from the field," Hanan explained. "The shoulder stock we make for the Glock is a perfect example. I was meeting with people who work in the field. Getting ideas from them of what they needed. The GSS asked for the stock."

Other than a molding to provide exact, accurate fit for individual handgun makes and models, all Fobus holsters have the same design and features. They are high-ride, open-top and paddle style. The paddle is 3 inches wide at the top. Two prongs located just below your belt firmly secure the paddle that widens to 4.5 inches. It is contoured its entire length for a comfortable fit. A dual, medium and wide belt loop model is now becoming available. The holster is mounted on the paddle with an FBI rake (muzzle angled backward) of approximately 20 degrees, the rake designated by the Sabak's handgun instructors.

The front edge of the pouch on all Fobus holsters is cut down to the middle of the pistol's ejection port. There is a

built-in interior ridge molded into the pouch's face to protect front sights. The RX-18 polymer has a dull black look. Its smooth surface and feel adds to the speed of one's draw. In six months of daily use, I've yet to notice any wear caused by these holsters to the finish of either of my pistols.

The holster encloses 85% of the trigger guard allowing for a full three-finger grip with first hand contact while preventing accidental trigger access. An indentation in the area of the trigger guard provides a positive and comfortable "rest" for one's index finger when drawing. Handgun retention is ensured by the use of opposing "prongs" that are positioned to close tight against one another just inside the forward edge of the trigger guard. The back edge of the holster's trigger guard flexes open to allow the trigger guard to enter, then "snaps" closed. Drawing is exceptionally quick when one employs a strong and deliberate upward pull. The handgun is held firmly. I've held my Sig 226 with fully loaded 17 round magazine, upside-down in its Fobus holster and shook it up and down with a reasonable degree of force. My Sig held tight. Same test, same result with my 1911-A1

Fobus makes a full line of mag pouches, handcuff holders and magazine/SureFire pouch combinations in addition to its holsters. All their products come with a lifetime warranty. Besides being standard issue for many of Israel's security professionals, and military units, Fobus holsters are used by law-enforcement authorities and Special Operations Units worldwide. Asked about sales in the U.S.A., Hanan answered, "the FBI at Quantico."

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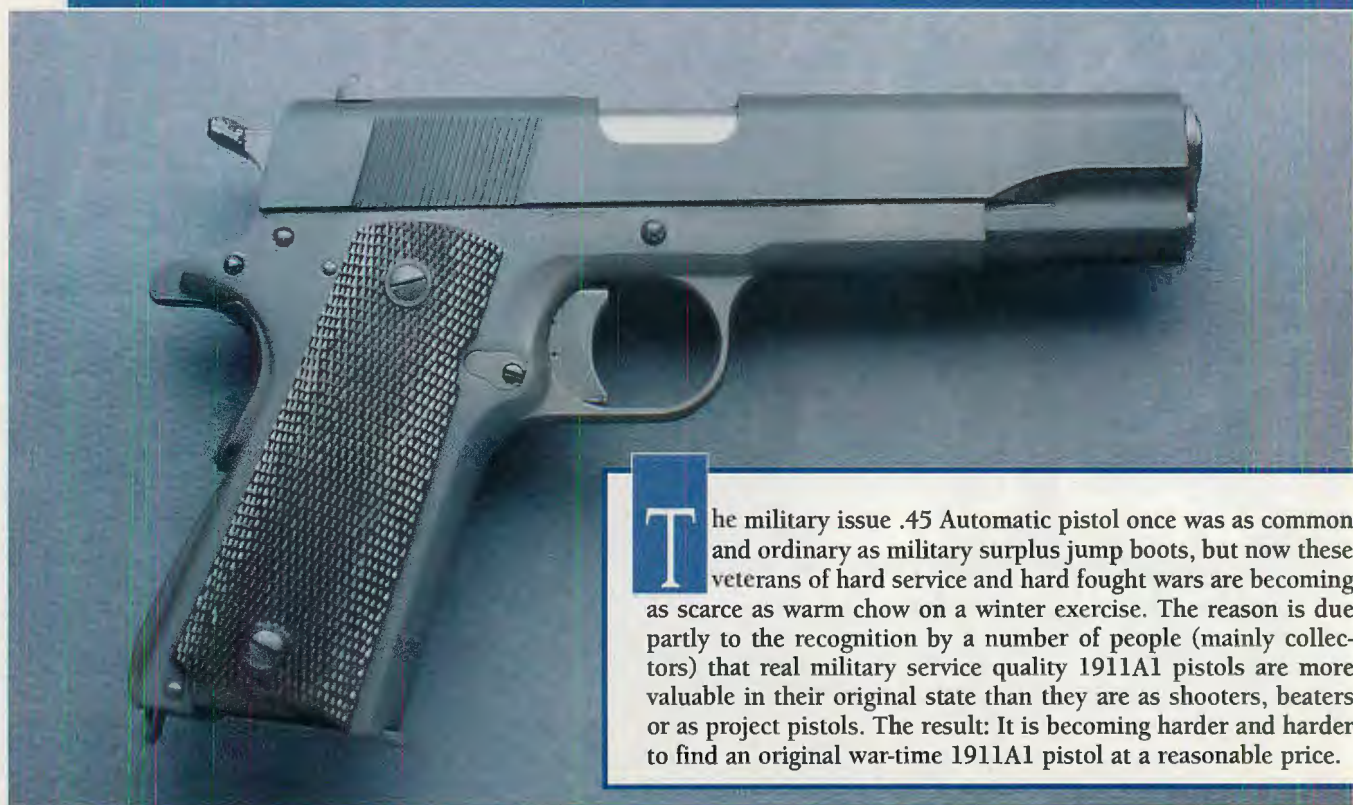
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Auto-Ordnance Model 1911A1 U.S. ARMY Pistol

TEXT & PHOTOS BY FRANK W. JAMES



The military issue .45 Automatic pistol once was as common and ordinary as military surplus jump boots, but now these veterans of hard service and hard fought wars are becoming as scarce as warm chow on a winter exercise. The reason is due partly to the recognition by a number of people (mainly collectors) that real military service quality 1911A1 pistols are more valuable in their original state than they are as shooters, beaters or as project pistols. The result: It is becoming harder and harder to find an original war-time 1911A1 pistol at a reasonable price.

Kahr Arms now owns the Auto-Ordnance Corporation (Kahr Arms/Auto-Ordnance, Dept. SOF, 630 Route 303, Blauvelt, NY 10913; phone: 845-353-7770; fax: 845-353-7833; email: kahrhq@compuserve.com; website: www.tommygun.com), the firm that created the Thompson Submachine Gun. Auto-Ordnance introduced at the 2001 Shot Show a version of the 1911 pistol that every World War II veteran will easily recognize. Called the 1911PKZ it is very similar in looks and construction to the famous and legendary 1911A1 pistol that served our country so well in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

The Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ frame is manufactured from a 4140 carbon steel investment casting, while the slide is machined from a solid bar of 4130 carbon steel. The frames and slides are milled and formed on computerized machining centers in Kahr's own production facility. The Model 1911PKZ features a parkerized finish, an arched mainspring housing complete with lanyard loop and a "Model 1911A1 U.S. Army" inscription on the left side of the slide.

The sights on the 1911PKZ are a slight improvement over standard military G.I. sights, but they are true enough to the original designs that purists and competition-minded shooters will complain about their lack of definition. The hammer on the test model was the old, well-rounded, wide style that some of us kind of prefer for nostalgia reasons. The magazine made by MetalForm features a removable floorplate and a seven-round capacity. The grip panels are brown plastic and overall this pistol does much to capture the look and feel of a genuine military issue 1911A1 pistol.

Shooting the test pistol through a mixed batch of over 200 rounds of .45 ACP ammunition revealed that like the

military original the test Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ pistol preferred full metal jacketed ammo over modern hollowpoint ammunition. It had difficulty digesting hollowpoint ammo provided by Winchester Ammunition (Dept. SOF, 427 North Shamrock St., East Alton, IL 62024-1174, phone: 618-258-3692; fax: 618-258-3609; website: www.winchester.com) and CCI Speer/Blount (Dept. SOF, 2299 Snake River Ave., Lewiston, ID 83501; phone: 208-746-2351; fax: 208-798-3392). However, other commentators (whom I trust) have reported good performance with hollowpoint ammunition from different manufacturers.

The Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ functioned flawlessly on all types of 230-grain ball ammo. Five-shot groups averaged around 4.5 inches with hard ball ammo at 50 feet. Several four-shot groups were well under 2.0 inches, but invariably a relaxed grip activated the grip safety and yielded a non-firing pistol after a trigger pull of untold pressure. All of which did nothing for the consistency of the fifth shot.

The Auto-Ordnance is not a true replica of a World War II issue 1911A1 pistol because the trigger is longer than the military issue gun, but like all military-issue .45s the grip safety will start a good callus on the web of your hand between the thumb and forefinger. With a manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$462.00, this pistol is sure to bring back memories for every veteran in America. The added bonus is, unlike our present military sidearm, this one is chambered in a serious caliber and really has no great need for expensive hollowpoint ammunition to be effective in an armed self-defense encounter.

While retaining some of the shortcomings of the military original, the Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ still has the look and feel of a genuine G.I. .45 and is being offered at a price most retired veterans, and their grandchildren, can afford.



Camelbak

BY SOF STAFF

CamelBak Products was formed in 1988 to bring a product to market that provided a unique solution to the body's demand for water while on the move. During the early '90s, the company's Hands-Free Hydration™ systems became popular with cyclists when scientific studies showed athletes drank more fluids and performed better when they wore a CamelBak product. Similarly, the importance of providing troops with water on the battlefield and in training operations has always been a priority for the U.S. Military. In 1991, Operation Desert Storm further emphasized the importance of providing and delivering water to troops under conditions of extreme heat.

CamelBak systems are used by every branch of the United States Military, the U.S. Border Patrol, tactical law enforcement, the U.S. government, as well as the armed forces of many foreign countries. The CamelBak system enables all of these professionals to operate at peak performance. In fact, the Storm™ is the standard issue hydration system with the Armed Forces' new MOLLE system pack.

CamelBak Hands-Free Hydration Systems are making similar inroads into the occupational health and safety fields. Like athletes and soldiers, workers in a variety of industries are often faced with hot, humid conditions — frequently while wearing protective clothing. To meet the needs of all these groups, CamelBak offers a full range of Hands-Free Hydration systems to professional and novice athletes, military and law enforcement professionals and workers in a variety of industries where hot, humid, hard-working conditions are a fact of life.

In an effort to provide the most advanced cutting-edge hydration technology for military and law enforcement personnel, CamelBak Products has revamped its Maximum Gear Line of Hands-Free Hydration™ Systems.

Perhaps the biggest innovation of all is the patent-pending Omega™ Reservoir that increases the ease of filling and cleaning through its extra wide opening and ergonomic handle. The baffled reservoir also delivers a solid, secure seal. As with CamelBak's standard reservoirs, the Omega provides a quiet, slosh-free environment that drains liquid smoothly and maintains a balanced load. It includes CamelBak's patented Big Bite™ Valve.

The Viper®, a new system with a 102-oz., 3.1-liter reservoir, supplies more water capacity than ever before. The Viper

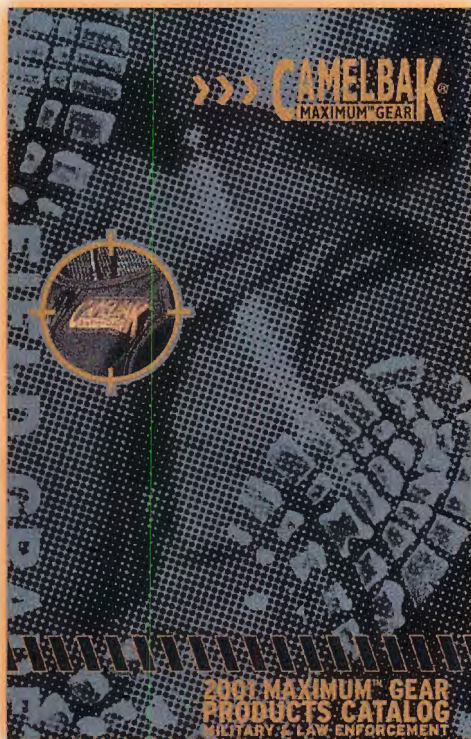
is modeled after CamelBak's popular Stealth™ unit, but is designed for even longer missions. In addition to the massive Omega™ baffled reservoir, which provides for quick and easy filling and cleaning, the Viper features 1.5 liters (90 cubic inches) of integrated storage space in two side-zip pockets. Like the Stealth, the Viper is ergonomic, low profile and perfect for tight quarters. The Viper has a number of new CamelBak features, including the Omega Access Port, which provides for quick and easy external filling; a low profile design to ensure a comfortable fit under armor or gear; a ventilated back panel to keep the wearer cool and comfortable all day long, and a HydroLock™ valve that securely shuts off water flow. The Viper is available in black.

The 100-oz., 3.0-liter ThermoBak® is built to the same rigorous specifications as its 2.0-liter sibling. The higher-capacity ThermoBak provides the basic platform that the military needs to be fully functional — with easy access to a clean water supply — in any situation. With a stowage pocket that can accommodate CamelBak's NBC/CBR Chemically Resistant Reservoir and Gas Mask Adapter Kit, the 3-liter ThermoBak can be used anywhere, anytime — from everyday use and domestic engagements to chemical training or a lethal gas environment. It integrates easily with other extended mission gear, such as load-bearing systems or web harness platforms, and features quick-release straps that stow inside built-in pockets. The 100

oz., 3.0-liter system is available in black, woodland camouflage and olive drab. The 70-oz., 2.0-liter ThermoBak is available in black and camouflage.

Several CamelBak systems have been redesigned. The MotherLode™, with 1,700 cubic inches of storage space, has enough room to haul water, ammunition, MREs, communications, optics and first aid equipment, foul weather gear and extra clothing to meet the demands of any assignment. And it all stows in three separate cargo chambers, complete with internal organizers for tools and small items or a second reservoir. In addition to all this storage capacity, the MotherLode boasts a 100-oz., 3.0-liter easy-to-fill, easy-to-clean Omega™ Reservoir.

The redesigned Stealth is now built around CamelBak's 72-oz., 2.1-liter baffled new Omega reservoir. It also includes



Continued on page 73

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- Finn Aagaard

"Speaking of triggers, our colleague and hunting buddy, Rich Wyatt, can absolutely do the job on your Steyr Scout, if it needs it as some do. He can put a Jeff Cooper trigger in your new gun, which is something the factory will not do."

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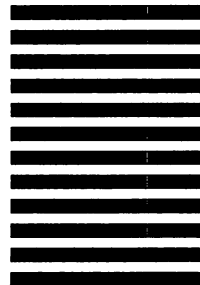
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